THE MEANING OF THE QURĀN

Vol.I

[Sūrah Al-Pātihah to Al-An'ām]

(ARABIC TEXT WITH TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY)

By

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PRONUNCIATION KEY
TO
ARABIC NAMES AND WORDS

Vowels

Symbols

(ـَ)	as in	أ	a	sounds	as	a	in	a-bet
		آ	ā	"	"	a	"	art
(ـَيْ)	as in	أي	aj	"	"	a	"	bat
(ـِي)	"	أي	ī	"	"	ee	"	bee
(ـِ)	"	إ	i	"	"	i	"	it
(ـُ)	"	أُ	u	"	"	u	"	put
(و)	"	أُو	ū	"	"	u	"	rule
(وْ)	"	أَوْ	au	sounds between the a in art and o in over but closer to the latter.				
	ع	'		at the top before a vowel indicates a semi- vowel made by articulating the same in the glottis.				
		'		at the top before a vowel indicates a semi-vowel.				

Consonants

د	d	indicates a consonant that sound as th in then.
غ	gh	indicates a consonant made by articulating g in give in the glottis.
ه	h	
ح	h	indicates a consonant between voiced h and kh
خ	kh	indicates a consonant made by articulating voiced h in the glottis.
ج	j	as in jug.
ت	t	indicates a soft consonant (French t) made with the tongue tip touching the upper front teeth.
ط	t	may be pronounced as t.
س	s	

ش	sh	
ص	s	may be pronounced as s.
ث		th indicates a consonant made by articulating th in think.
ك	k	
ق	q	indicates a consonant made by articulating k in the glottis.
ي	y	indicates a consonant that sounds as y in yes.
ض	d	may be pronounced as z in zebra.
ز	z	" " " " "
ذ	z	" " " " "
ظ	dh	" " " " "
ب	b	
ر	r	
ل	l	
م	m	
ن	n	
ف	f	
و	w	

Note: 1. The double use of the same consonant indicates stress (ـّـ)

2. Caution: The above key is by no means a master key to Arabic names and words. There are very delicate differences in the apparently like sounds of some consonants but it is very difficult to distinguish these by means of any key. This key merely gives nearly correct pronunciation.

3. Words of frequent occurrence:
Qur'ān, Sūrah, Makkah, Al-Madīnah, Ka'abah.

N.B.

1. Figures on the margin of the Text denote the number of verse in the paragraphs, and figures at the end of and above words in the translation of the Text denote the number of the Explanatory Notes.

2. E.N. stands for Explanatory Note.

GLOSSARY

عصر — 'Asr prayer is one of the five prescribed prayers and is offered in the late afternoon.

ظہر — *Dhuhr* is the early afternoon prayer.

حضرت — *Hadrat* is a title of respect and reverence.

حج — Haj is the obligatory pilgrimage to the Ka'abah (Makkah) in the prescribed days of Zul-Haj. It is obligatory on every Muslim, at least once in one's life-time, if one can afford expenses for it and is otherwise fit and free to make a journey to it.

احرام — *Ihrām* is the seamless garment worn by the pilgrims to Makkah.

امام — Imām is the one who leads the congregational prescribed prayers. It is also used as a title for a leader of anything.

عشاء — *'Ishā'* is the prescribed night prayer.

کعبہ — Ka'abah is a cube-shaped room in the centre of Masjid-i-Harām. It was built by Prophet Abraham and has always been the centre of God-worship.

کافر — *Kāfir* is one who is guilty of *kufr*.

کفر — *Kufr* has been used in the Qurān in different senses in different places. In some places it stands for total disbelief and in others for ingratitude or hypocrisy or for discarding of Islam fromm practical life etc.etc.

مسجد حرام — *Masjid-i-Harām* is the sacred mosque (the inviolable place of worship) at Makkah which has the Ka'abah in its centre.

مشرک — *Mushrik* is one who practises *shirk* in any form (please see *shirk*).

قبلہ — Qiblah is the point (Masjid-i-Harām) towards which the Muslims turn their faces at Salāt from every corner of the Earth.

صلوٰۃ — *Salāt* is the obligatory prayer in the prescribed form which must be offered five times a day.

شرک — *Shirk* has no equivalent in English and is idolatry, heathenism, polytheism, paganism etc., and more than these. One ay be guilty of *Shirk* even if one is not an idolater and even if one professed to believe in Allah. *Shirk* is to ascribe any of the exclusive characteristics or powers or rights of Allah to any other or to associate any other with Him in any way whatsoever.

سورہ — *Sūrah* is a chapter of the Qurān.

توحید *Tauhīd* is the opposite of *shirk*. It is the doctrine that Allah is One Being in the sense that He is Unique in His Person, in His Attributes, in His Powers and in His Rights, and has no offspring, no compeer, no partner and no associate in any way and capacity whatsoever. He alone is the Creator, the Sustainer, the Sovereign, the Ruler and the sole Deity.

عُمرہ *'Umrah* is the voluntary pilgrimage to Ka'abah (Makkah). It is performed at any other time than during the days of Haj.

زکوٰۃ *Zakāt* is the obligatory due from those Muslims whose annual savings, agricultural products etc., go beyond the limits presrcibed by Islām. Its rate varies with different kinds of produce, different forms of wealth etc. Islām has laid down specific heads in which it should be spent.

FOREWORD

The English version of the renowned exegesis of the Holy Qur'an by *Syed Abul A'ala Maududi* was initially published in sixteen Volumes. Later after the completion of the English translation we got it recomposed on computer in six Volumes according to the original Urdu work to facilitate the readers. By the grace of Allah, we are now presenting this set in a much attractive way with new get up.

No doubt it was a Herculian task to get the whole work recomposed but by the grace of Allah and under the intellectual patronage of *Prof. Muhammad Amin Javaid* Managing Director and with the help of *Mr. Abdul Waheed Khan* who minutely went through all the six volumes, checked the proofs twice and thrice to ensure a most correct and beautiful edition and *Mr. Rasheed Ahmed Chaudhry* owner of Maktaba Jadeed Press who assisted us in bringing out this renowned exegesis in a most attractive form. We also intend to add a detailed index of the whole set as the seventh volume as soon as possible. We hope the Meaning of the Qur'an in its new form would be duly appreciated and welcomed all over the globe.

Muhammad Munir Afzal
(General Manager)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Page (i)

PREFACE

(Adapted)

"The Meaning of the Qur'ān" follows the interpretation of Maulana Abul A'lā Maudūdī as contained in the *"Tafhīmul Qur'ān."* This work has been before the reading public for a decade or so and has elicited unqualified and universal praise because of the freshness of its approach and its clairity and force. It can be safely asserted that this work has contributed more towards understanding the Qur'ān than any other such work in our time. For it has applied the Qur'ānic principles to the solution of the problems of the modern age, and demonstrated in a wonderful way how up-to-date the Qur'ān is and how surely it marches with the times.

It has, however, been felt that the people, who do not know Urdu or are not well-versed in it, cannot derive any benefit from the *"Tafhimul-Qur'ān."* I have, therefore, with a deep sense of responsibility, undertaken the delicate and difficult task of rendering this work into English under the guidance of the Maulana himself. I am fully conscious of my limitations and pray to Allah to help me in this work.

"The Meaning of the Qur'ān" aims to fulfil the growing desire of the educated people to grasp the true spirit of the Qur'ān and understand the real object of its revelation. It is hoped that this work will meet the demand that has been increasing day by day in spite of the praiseworthy efforts of the translators and commentators.

The main object of this work is to enable the English reader to understand clearly the meaning and the aim of the Qur'ān and to impress on his mind, as far as possible, the same effect that it intends to produce. In order to achieve this, (a) an interpretation has been

attempted instead of a literal translation and (b) Explanatory Notes have been added wherever necessary.

A free explanatory translation has been adopted for two reasons: (1) A word for word translation of the Qur'ān has already been done by several worthy persons and that suffices to serve its purpose. (2) It cannot fulfil the object for which this work has been undertaken. As a matter of fact, literal translation often becomes a hindrance to the full understanding of the Qur'ān.

A literal translation of the Qur'ān suffers from many drawbacks. It is incapable of transferring the linguistic charm and sublime theme of the original Arabic Text into any other language: nor can it retain the continuity of the theme so as to induce one to read it as a coherent whole and derive the same benefit from it as from a closely connected book. That is why the reader who studies its literal transferring fails to appreciate the fluency and the dynamic force of the Qur'ān, and a sceptic begins to doubt whether it is the same Book which challenged the world to produce the like of it.

A literal translation suffers from another defect; it does not and cannot take into consideration the fact that the Qur'ān was at first not a book but a living voice. Every student of the Qur'ān knows that in the first instance it was addressed to hearers and delivered by public recitals and was not published for readers in the form of pamphlets, tracts and booklets. And it is obvious that a literal translation cannot transfer the informal style of an oral address into the conventional style of a written work.

A few instances will illustrate this point. In an address an objection is often answered even without any reference to it, but in a written work, an objection is first cited and then answered. Moreover, in a written work, the background has to be explained in words: otherwise there appears to be a gap in it and it may even become unintelligible. Then in a written work, a parenthesis has sometimes to be used by way of explanation, but in an address such things are often left to the manner and suggestive action of the speaker, without showing any gap or incoherence in it. That is why even if an excellent speech is written down on paper, there appear to the casual reader many irrelevancies in it. This defect can only be removed by the adoption of free translation,

by changing the informal style of an oral address into the conventional style of a written work.

There is still another handicap in a literal translation. An English word is not always the exact equivalent of an Arabic word; it is, therefore, difficult to transfer accurately into English every shade of meaning that is contained in the Arabic word of the Qur'ān. A free translation, however, can convey in English the meaning of an Arabic sentence as a whole.

Almost all the existing English translations of the Qur'ān suffer from the drawbacks of a literal translation. Besides these, they have two more defects: (a) Generally they follow the archaic English of the Bible, which makes the meaning of the Qur'ān unintelligible. (b) They isolate every verse, number it and show it as an independent whole and thus take away life and dynamic force out of it. It is obvious that even if an excellent discourse is dissected and written in separate enumerated sentences, it fails to produce the effect which would have been produced by keeping it as a continuous whole.

That is why a general impression has been created that the Qur'ān lacks continuity of subject and deals with miscellaneous topics in a haphazard manner without any interconnection between the verses. No existing English translation claims or attempts to show that there is unity of purpose in the whole of the Qur'ān; that all its topics revolve around the central theme and never deviate from that, its each Sūrah is a complete whole and all its verses are interconnected.

Naturally the non-Muslim translators cannot be expected to do full justice to the Holy Qur'ān, for they are generally inspired by hostile intentions or at best by tolerance because they regard the Qur'ān to be 'the product of (Prophet) Muhammad's (Allah's peace be upon him) own imagination or an inspired literature'; there are others whose chief aim is to reflect "rhythm, music and the exalted tone of the original." Doubtless the thrilling rhythms of the Qur'ān touch the very core of the heart. But that is not the real object of the Qur'ān, it is only a means to it. Though the Muslim translators approach the Book with reverence, they do not try to remove the difficulties which are a real hindrance to its right and full understanding. The westernised Muslim translators wittingly or un-wittingly try to explain away those things which they

consider to be irreconcilable with modern thought. There are others who approach the Qur'ān with the poet's or mystic's approach and help make the Qur'ān a mystery and enigma.

Now let us turn to the Explanatory Notes. Sometimes it is asked, "Why should any notes be added to a translation? Why not let the Qur'ān speak for itself ?" Indeed the Qur'ān does eloquently speak for itself ?" it did not require any notes at the time of its revelation. The Holy Prophet was its living commentary: and the addressees were well acquainted with its style and the backgrounds of its discourses. But with the passage of time, it was felt that many things needed explanation for their fuller comprehension, and the scholars of the Qur'ān rose to the occasion in every age and fulfilled the need. That is why Explanatory Notes have been added to this interpretation. They explain the difficult passages and show the continuity of the theme and the interconnection between the verses and indicate the background wherever necessary. They also contain relevant quotations from the Traditions of the Holy Prophet, the Bible, the Talmud and books on Fiqh etc. etc. They also discuss the problems relating to the Islamic way of life but avoid unnecessary controversies. In short, these Notes help understand the Qur'ān by removing those difficulties which a modern reader encounters.

In order to avoid the common defects of the existing English translations, the following devices have been adopted in *"The meaning of the Qur'ān"*:

1. An attempt has been made to express the meaning of the Qur'ān in simple, clear and effective modern English. An explanatory translation into intelligible English has been adopted and appropriate words have been placed within brackets to fill up the gaps which necessarily occur in every translation. Full care, however, has been taken to remain faithful to the original.

2. Anticipated difficulties have been removed and likely objections answered in the Introduction to each Sūrah.

3. The background of every Sūrah has been given in its introduction and the periods the circumstances and the occasion of its revelation have been specified, for every discourse has its own

background and is so intimately connected with it that if it is isolated from it, its contents are liable to become unintelligible.

4. The meanings of the Text have been divided into coherent paragraphs.

5. Wherever there is no equivalent of an Arabic word in English, it has either been explained by a phrase or retained in the original.

6. A glossary of un-translated Arabic words and a key to the correct pronunciation of Arabic names and words have been added.

In this connection it is necessary to add a word of caution. There is a general tendency to regard the English translation of the Holy Qur'ān as The Qur'ān. It is obviously a misnomer. No translation, however good it may be, can ever take the place of the original Qur'ān, which is its Arabic Text; for it is impossible to reproduce its matchless, enchanting and grand style, its highly emotive and fiery language and its forceful rhetoric. Therefore one must turn to the original Arabic Text for fuller appreciation and understanding. Only then will the reader himself experience how irresistibly he is being moved to ecstasy and his heart melted and stirred to noble action

"The Meaning Of the Qur'ān" merely attempts to help the reader to understand and appreciate the Arabic Text of the original Qur'ān and is not an substitute for it. I pray to Allah to help and guide me in the achievement of this object.

N.B.---It is intended to publish *"The Meaning Of the Qur'ān"* in suitable instalments. The present work is the first of the series.

Suggestions for improvement will be welcomed.

Muhammad Akbar
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West Pakistan

Second Edition

In this Edition some changes have been made in the light of the suggestions received since the publication of the first Edition. It is expected that these will help improve the Translation.

Muhammad Akbar Muradpuri

Acknowledgement

Acknowledge with gratitude my obligation to Mr. P.H. Harwood, M.A. (Oxon) who has very kindly examined thoroughly the manuscript and made valuable suggestions.

I am also very thankful to Mr. A.A. Kamal M.A., who has been very closely associated with this work for many years and has been ungrudgingly giving his precious time and knowledge to the improvement of *"The Meaning Of the Qur'ān"*.

I am very glad to say that two more scholars (who prefer to remain anonymous) have joined the Board of Translators. I am confident that their co-operation will prove very helpful in the performance of this onerous duty.

Muhammad Akbar Muradpuri

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

INTRODUCTION

I have two objects in view in writing this Introduction to the study of the Qur'ān.

First, I want to acquaint the reader with those things which will help him to understand the meaning of the Qur'ān. If he does not become conversant with them in the very beginning, they keep coming back into his mind over and over again, and often become a hindrance to his going deep into its meaning and spirit.

Second, I want to answer beforehand some of the questions which usually arise during the study of the Qur'ān. I have confined myself to those questions which arose in my own mind when I began my critical study of it or the ones which I came across afterwards. If there be any other questions besides these, God willing, I will answer them in the next edition.

Unique Book

Before the reader begins the study of the Qur'ān, he must bear in mind the fact that it is a unique Book, quite different from the books one usually reads. Unlike conventional books, the Qur'ān does not contain information, ideas and arguments about specific themes arranged in a literary order. That is why a stranger to the Qur'ān, on his first approach to it, is baffled when he does not find the enunciation of its theme or its division into chapters and sections or separate treatment of different topics and separate instructions for different aspects of life arranged in a serial order. On the contrary there is something with which he has not been familiar before and which does not conform to his conception of a book. He finds that it deals with creeds, gives moral instructions, lays down laws, invites people to Islam, admonishes the disbelievers, draws lessons from historical events, administers warnings, gives good tidings, all blended together in a beautiful manner. The same

subject is repeated in different ways and one topic follows the other without any apparent connection. Sometimes a new topic crops up in the middle of another without any apparent reason. The speaker and the addressees, and the direction of the address change without any notice. There is no sign of chapters and divisions anywhere. Historical events are presented but not as in history books. The problems of Philosophy and Metaphysics are treated in a manner different from that of the textbooks on the subjects. Man and the Universe are mentioned in a language different from that of the natural sciences. Likewise it follows its own method of solving cultural, political, social and economic problems and deals with the principles and injunctions of law in a manner quite different from that of the sociologists, lawyers and jurists. Morality is taught in a way that has no parallel in the whole literature on the subject.

That is why the unwary reader is baffled and puzzled when he finds all these things contrary to his pre-conceived conception of a book. He begins to feel that the Qur'ān is a book without any order or interconnection between its verses or continuity of its subject, or that it deals with miscellaneous topics in an incoherent manner, or that it had been given the form of a continuous book though it was not a book in the commonly accepted sense of the word. As a result of this, its opponents raise strange objections against the Qur'ān and its modern followers adopt strange devices to ward off doubts and objections. They either resort to escapism or put forward strange interpretations to ease their minds. Sometimes they try to create artificial connections between the verses to explain away the apparent incoherencies and as a last resort, they even accept the theory that the Qur'ān deals with miscellaneous topics without any order or coherence. Consequently verses are isolated from their context and confusion is produced in the meanings.

This happens when the reader does not take into consideration the fact that the Qur'ān is a unique book. It does not, like other books, enunciate at the very beginning the subject it deals with and the object it intends to achieve. Its style and method of explaining things are also quite different from those of other books one commonly reads and it does not follow any bookish order. Above all it is not a book on religion in the sense this word is generally understood. That is why when a

reader approaches the Qur'ān with the common notions of a book, he is rather puzzled by its style and manner of presentation. He finds that at many places the background has not been mentioned and the circumstances under which a particular passage was revealed have not been stated. As a result of these things, the ordinary reader is unable to benefit fully from the most precious treasures contained in the Qur'ān, though occasionally he may succeed in discovering a few gems here and there. Only those people become victims of such doubts who are not acquainted with these distinctive features of the Qur'ān. They seem to find miscellaneous topics scattered all over its pages and feel difficulties about its meanings. Nay, even those verses, which are absolutely clear, appear to them to be quite irrelevant in the contexts they occur.

The reader may be saved from all these difficulties, if he is warned beforehand that *the Book he is going to study is the only book of its kind in the whole world: that its literary style is quite different from that of all other books: that its theme is unique and that his preconceived notions of a book cannot help him understand the Qur'ān.* Nay these may even become a hindrance. He should, therefore, first of all free his mind from preconceived notions and get acquainted with the distinctive features of this Book. Then and then alone can he understand it.

In order to understand the Qur'ān thoroughly it is essential to know the nature of this Book, its central idea and its aim and object. The reader should also be well acquainted with its style, the terms it uses and the method it adopts to explain things. He should also keep in view the background and circumstances under which a certain passage was revealed.

Divine Guidance

First of all the reader should understand the real nature of the Qur'ān. Whether one believes it to be a revealed book or not, one will have to consider. as a starting point, the claim that is put forward by itself and its bearer, Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), that this is the Divine Guidance.

The Lord of the Universe, its Creator, Master and Sovereign created Man and bestowed upon him the faculties of learning, speaking, understanding and discerning right from wrong and good from evil. He granted him freedom of choice, freedom of will, freedom of action and

gave him authority to acquire and make use of the things around him. In short, He granted him a kind of autonomy and appointed him as His Vicegerent on the Earth and instructed him to live in accordance with His Guidance.

At the time, when the Lord of the Universe appointed Man as His Vicegerent, He warned him very clearly and precisely, leaving no doubt in his mind as to the kind of relations he should have with Him, as if to say I am your Master and Sovereign and that of the whole universe; therefore you should worship Me and none else. You are neither independent in My kingdom nor the subject of anyone else, to whom you might owe obedience or worship. You are being sent to the Earth with certain powers for a fixed term of time for your test. After that you will have to return to Me. Then I will judge the deeds you did in the world and decide whether you have come out successful or failed in the test. Therefore the right course for you is to accept Me voluntarily as Sovereign and worship Me alone and act in the world according to the Guidance I shall send you, and live on the Earth with the conviction and understanding that it is merely the place of your Trial. Your real object in earthly life should be to come out successful in the final judgement. Therefore any other course different from and opposed to the Divine Guidance, will be wrong. If you adopt the first course, (and you have full liberty and freedom to adopt it), you will achieve peace and tranquillity in this world and win the home of eternal bliss and joy (Paradise) in the next world, to which you shall have to return. And if you follow any other course (and you are quite free to do, if you so choose), you shall incur (My disfavour in this) world and eternal sorrow and affliction in the Hereafter, where you shall be thrown into the abyss of Hell.

After such a warning, the Owner of the Universe sent Adam and Eve (Allah's peace be upon them) the first human beings, to the Earth and gave them the guidance according to which they and their descendants were to live in this world. Thus the first two human beings were not created in ignorance and darkness but were given very clear and bright Light and the Law they were to follow. This was Islam (submission to Allah). Before they left this world, they themselves practised and taught the same way to their children and children's children and exhorted them to live as Muslims (obedient servants of

Allah). But in the succeeding centuries, by and by, people swerved from this straight way of life (Islam) and adopted different crooked ways. They not only lost the Guidance owing to their negligence but also tampered with it because of their wickedness. They attributed to others. The qualities and powers of Allah and associated others to rank with Him as gods and ascribed His rights to others. They invented different kinds of religions (ways of life) by mixing up all sorts of superstitions, wrong theories and false philosophies with the Guidance that was given by Allah. They discarded the right, just and moral principles taught by Allah or corrupted them and made such laws of life as suited their prejudices and lusts, and filled Allah's earth with chaos and iniquity.

Though this was a sad state of affairs, Allah did not will to force these corrupt people to follow the Right way because this would have been against the limited freedom of action which had been granted to man by Him; nor did He will to destroy them forthwith as soon as rebellion broke out against Him, because this would not have been in keeping with the rules of life laid down for trial in this world. Instead of this, Allah took upon Himself, from the very beginning of man's life on the Earth, to send His Guidance to him during his term of life, leaving him free to follow or not to follow it. Accordingly he made arrangements for the Guidance of mankind and appointed His Messengers from among the people themselves and bestowed upon them the knowledge of the Truth and the Right Way of life. They were charged with the mission to invite people to the Right Way from which they had strayed. The Messengers themselves believed in Allah and acted in accordance with the Guidance they received from him. They were raised from different nations in different countries and thousands of them were sent during thousands of years. They all had one and the same religion which was based on the Unity of God and accountability in the Hereafter. They all taught the same way of life that was taught to the first Man at the very start of his life in this world. They all followed the same Guidance, that is, those fundamental and eternal principles of morality and culture which were prescribed for the first Man from the very first day of his life. They all had the one and the same mission, that is, to invite all human beings to the same Guidance, and to organise them into one community. All those people who accepted their invitation became one community, which was duty bound to follow the Divine

Guidance and to do its best and utmost to establish it and to guard against any transgressions.

During their respective terms, these Messengers fulfilled their mission admirably well. But it is a pity that the majority of the people were not inclined to accept their invitation and even those who joined their community gradually became corrupt. So much so that some of these communities totally lost that Guidance and others tampered with the Commandments of Allah and mixed them up with false things.

Then the Lord of the Universe sent Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) as His last Messenger to fulfil the same mission for which Messengers had been sent before him. He extended his invitation to all human beings, including the corrupt followers of the previous Messengers and asked them to follow the Right Way. He organised all those who accepted the Divine Guidance in to one community which in its turn, was required to re-establish its collective way of life based on the Guidance and to exert its utmost to reform the world which had gone astray. *The Qur'ān which was revealed to Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) is the Book which contains that Invitation and that Divine Guidance.*

Central Theme

Now that we have come to know the nature of the Qur'ān, it has become easier to determine the subject it deals with, its central theme and its aim and object.

The *Subject* it deals with is *Man:* it discusses those aspects of his life that lead either to his real success or failure.

The *Central Theme* that runs throughout the Qur'ān is the exposition of the Reality and the invitation to the Right Way based on it. It declares that Reality is the same that was revealed by Allah Himself to Adam at the time of his appointment as vicegerent, and to all the Messengers after him, and the Right Way is the same that was taught by all the Messengers. It also points out that all theories contradictory to this Reality invented by people about God, the Universe, Man and his relations with God and the rest of His creation, are all wrong and that all the ways of life based on them are erroneous and lead to ruinous consequences.

The *Aim* and *Object* of the revelations is to invite Man to that Right Way and to present clearly the Guidance which he has lost because of his negligence or has perverted by his wickedness.

If the reader keeps these three basic things in mind, he will find that in this Book there is no incongruity in the style, no gap in the continuity of the subject and no lack of interconnection between its various topics. As a matter of fact, this Book is not irrelevant anywhere with regard to its Subject, its Central Theme and its aim. From its very beginning to its end, the different topics it deals with are so intimately connected with its Central Theme that they may be likened to the beautiful gems of the same necklace, despite their different colours and sizes. The Qur'ān keeps the same object in view, whether it is relating the story of the creation of the Earth or of the Heavens or of Man or is referring to the manifestations in the Universe or stating events from human history. As the aim of the Qur'ān is to guide Man and not to teach Nature Study or History or Philosophy or any other science or art, it does not concern itself with these latter subjects. The only thing with which it is concerned is to expound the reality, to remove misunderstandings and misconceptions about it, to impress the Truth upon the minds, to warn them of the consequences of wrong attitudes and to invite humanity to the Right Way.

The same is true of the criticism of the creeds of the moral systems, of the deeds of men and communities and of its discussions of the problems of Metaphysics etc. That is why it states or discusses or cites a thing only to the extent relevant to its aims and object and leaves out unnecessary and irrelevant details and turns over and over again to its Central Theme and to its invitation round which every other topic revolves. When the Qur'ān is studied in this light, no doubt is left that the whole of it is a closely reasoned argument and there is continuity of subject throughout the Book .

Background

One cannot understand fully many of the topics discussed in the Qur'ān unless one is acquainted with the background of their revelation. One should know the social, historical or other antecedents or conditions which help explain any particular topic. For, the Qur'ān was not revealed as a complete book at one and the same time; nor did Allah

hand over a written copy of it to Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) at the very beginning of his mission and command him to publish it and invite people to adopt a particular way of life. Moreover, it is not a literary work of the common conventional type that develops its central theme in a logical order; nor does it conform to the style of such a work. The Qur'ān adopts its own style to suit the guidance of the Islamic Movement that was started by Allah's Messenger under His direct command. Accordingly, Allah revealed the Qur'ān piecemeal to meet the requirements of the Movement in its different stages.

Makki Surahs

When the Holy Prophet was commanded to start his mission at Makkah, Allah sent down such instructions as the Messenger needed for his own training for the great work that was entrusted to him. The Qur'ān imparted also the basic knowledge of the Reality and gave brief answer to the common misunderstandings that misled people to adopt wrong ways of life and invited them to accept the basic principles of morality and adopt the right attitude that alone leads to the success and welfare of humanity.

These early messages consisted of short and concise sentences and were couched in a very fluent and effective language to suit the taste of the people to whom they were first addressed. Their excellent literary style was so appealing that it touched the co re of their hearts. They were so charming that they attracted the attention of the hearers who began to repeat them because of their beauty and elegance. Though universal truths were enunciated in these messages, they were given a local colour and were supported by arguments, examples and illustrations from the environment with which its first addressees were quite familiar. In order to impress the addressees effectively, these early addresses were confined to their own history, their traditions, their monuments beliefs, their morality and their evil ways.

This early stage of the Movement lasted for four years or so with the result that a few good people accepted its message and formed the nucleus of the future Muslim community. But the large majority of the Quraish began to oppose it because, in their ignorance, they thought that it hit hard at their vested interests and lusts and the old traditions of their

forefathers. The message of the Qur'ān, however, went on spreading beyond the boundaries of Makkah and reached other clans.

Then the Movement entered its second stage which continued for nine years or so and a fierce struggle began with the old order. Not only the Quraish but also the majority of its upholders also rose up to kill this Movement employing all sorts of weapons or at least to suppress it. They made false propaganda and levelled accusations and raised frivolous objections against it. They spread suspicions and doubts in order to alienate the common people from it. They hindered strangers from listening to the Holy Prophet and inflicted all sorts of cruelties on those who accepted Islam. They boycotted the Muslims socially and economically in order to intimidate and coerce them. Their persecution became so unbearable that some of them had to leave their homes twice for Abyssinia, and at last all of them had to migrate to Al-Madīnah. But in spite of persecution and hindrances, the Movement went on spreading. There was hardly a family or a household left in Makkah from which one person or the other had not accepted Islam. Naturally this produced bitterness in the hearts of the opponents of Islam. The persecution became all the more bitter when they saw that their own brothers, nephews, sons, daughters, sisters etc., had accepted Islam and become its faithful and strong supporters and were ready to defend it even with their lives.

The Movement also got impetus from the fact that it was drawing into its fold the best from among their people who became the embodiments of virtue after accepting Islam. The world, therefore, could not help feeling the moral superiority of the Movement that was so thoroughly transforming the characters of its followers.

All through this long and bitter struggle, Allah continued to reveal, according to the requirements of the occasion, inspiring addresses which highly influenced the thoughts and conduct of the hearers. On the one hand, these addresses instructed the Muslims in their primary duties, infused into them the spirit of loyalty and devotion to bind them together as members of the Muslim community and taught the ways of piety, high morality and purity of character and trained them to be true missionaries of Islam. On the other hand, these messages consoled, comforted and encouraged the Muslims with promises of success in this world and of eternal bliss in the hereafter. They urged

them also to exert their utmost in the way of Allah with fortitude, endurance and courage. The Muslims were so imbued with the spirit of sacrifice for this noble cause that they were ready to bear every kind of affliction and fight against the bitterest opposition. At the same time, these addresses administered warnings to those people who were opposing the Movement and those who were indifferent to it. Examples were cited from the history of the neighbouring peoples as proofs thereof. Their attention was also drawn to the ruins of the habitations by which they used to pass during their journeys: these were held out as object lessons. They were asked to observe the phenomena of Nature they saw day and night on the earth and in the heavens as a proof of the Unity of God and of the inevitable Hereafter.

The early addresses exposed the blasphemy of the idolaters and their association of partners with Allah and their worship of the old traditions so vividly as to convince all fair-minded persons of their error. They refuted their misconception that they were independent of God and not accountable to Him in the Hereafter with such clear reasoning as to leave no doubt in their hearts and minds. Every doubt was dispelled and every objection answered and every intricacy and complication, in which they were entangled and in which they were involving others, was unfolded and unravelled. In short, these addresses proved clearly and conclusively that the old ways were based on ignorance and were utterly void of sense. Side by side with this, the disbelievers were admonished for their immorality, their wrong ways of life and customs of ignorance and their opposition to the Truth and their persecution of the Believers. These early addresses also put forward those basic principles of culture and morality which have always been universally accepted and which have always formed the basis of the enlightened Divine civilization.

Several changes took place during the Makki stage of the Movement. It spread wider and wider, day by day, and the opposition to it became stronger and stronger in the same proportion. By and by, it came into contact with the people of different creeds and different ways of life and this gave rise to new problems. The discourses, therefore, began to deal with various new topics as well. This explains the difference of their style from those of the earlier ones.

This is the background of the Surahs which were revealed during the thirteen years of Makki life.

Madani Surahs

After facing opposition for thirteen years in Makkah, the Islamic Movement found a new centre in Al-Madinah where it became possible to collect all its followers from the various parts of Arabia and to unify and strengthen them. Accordingly, the Holy Prophet and the majority of the Muslims migrated to Al-Madinah.

Then the Movement entered its third stage under totally changed conditions. Now that the Muslim community had succeeded in founding a regular state, an armed encounter ensued with the exponents of the old order of ignorance. Besides this, the Jews and the Christians came into conflict with it even though they also professed to be the followers of Prophets. It had also to deal with different kinds of hypocrite 'Muslims' who had somehow or other entered its fold. But in spite of all those obstacles, the Movement succeeded in subduing the whole of Arabia after a hard struggle of ten years and was in a position to extend its universal message of reform to the outer world.

As, by and by, several changes took place in this stage also, and every changed condition had its own special problems, so Allah revealed to the Holy Prophet the kind of discourses required for any particular occasion. That is why some of these were couched in the fiery rhetoric of a warner and the others in the form of the royal edicts of the law giver. Some adopted the methods of a teacher, trainer and reformer and taught the principles and the methods of organising a community, of building up a state and of constructing a good civilisation for the conduct of different affairs of life. Others gave instructions for dealing with the hypocrites or the unbelievers, who had come under the protection of this Islamic State. Then in some of these discourses, the Muslims were taught the kind of relations they should have with the people of the Book and with the belligerent powers and with their own allies. In others they were taught, trained and organised to carry out their obligations as vicegerents of the Lord of the Universe. Some gave instruction for their guidance, and warned them of their weaknesses and exhorted them to sacrifice their lives and properties in the way of Allah. Others taught the moral lessons they needed in defeat and victory, adversity and prosperity, war and peace. In short, these trained them to carry on the missionary work for the propagation of Islam as the successors of the Holy Prophet. Then some discourses invited to Islam the people of the

Book, the hypocrites, the unbelievers and the blasphemers or rebuked them for their hard-heartedness or warned them of the doom in store for them or admonished them for neglecting lessons from the stories and events of the past, so as to leave no excuse for their sticking to the wrong ways of life.

This is the background of the Sūrahs that were revealed during the ten years at Al-Madīnah. It is obvious that their style had to be different from that of the Makki Sūrahs.

Style

It must have become clear from the above that the revelation of the Qur'ān began simultaneously with the beginning of the Islamic Movement and continued for twenty-three years. The different portions of the Qur'ān were revealed according to the requirements of the various phases of the Movement. It is thus obvious that a book like this cannot have the kind of uniformity of style which is followed in formal books on religion and the like. It should also be kept in mind that the various portions of the Qur'ān, both long and short, were not meant to be published in the form of pamphlets at the time of their revelation but were to be delivered as addresses and promulgated as such. Hence they could not be in the style of a written work. Moreover, these addresses were necessarily of a different nature from that of the lectures of a professor; therefore their style would naturally be different from them also. The Holy Prophet was entrusted with a special mission and had to appeal both to the emotions and to the intellect; he had to deal with people of different mentalities and cope with different situations and various kinds of experiences during the course of his mission. Such a person has to do all that is required for extending a message and for leading a movement. He has to impress the different aspects of his message on people's minds in order to change the established world of ideas, and to appeal to the feelings and emotions in order to counteract the forces of his opponents. He has also to train and reform his followers and to imbue them with spirit and courage, and to refute the arguments of opponents and to expose their moral weaknesses and so on. That is why the style of the discourses that Allah sent down to His Messenger had to be what suited the requirements of a Movement. It is, therefore, wrong to seek the style of a formal book or that of college lectures in the discourses of the Qur'ān.

That also explains why the same things are repeated over and over again in the Qur'ān. A mission and a movement naturally demand that only those things should be presented which are required at a particular stage and that nothing should be said about the requirements of the next stage. That is why the same things are repeated over and over again as long as the movement remains in the same stage, no matter whether it remains there for months or for years. Of course, these things have been differently worded and styled to avoid monotony, and couched in a beautiful and dignified language to make them effective and impressive. Moreover, it repeats at suitable places its basic good and principles in order to keep the Movement strong at every stage. That is why those Sūrahs which were revealed at a particular stage of the Movement generally deal with the same topics, though, of course, in different words and in various forms. Moreover, all the Sūrahs of the Qur'ān contain references to the basic creed, *i.e.*, the unity of Allah, His attributes, the Hereafter and accountability, punishment and reward, Prophethood, beliefin the Book etc.... They all teach piety, fortitude, endurance, faith and trust in Allah and the like, just because these virtues could not be neglected at any stage of the Movement. If any of these bases had been weakened at any stage even in the least, the Islamic Movement could not have made any progress in its true spirit.

Order

A little thinking in the light of the difference between the Makkī and the Madanī Sūrahs will also answer the question why the sūrahs of the Qur'ān were not arranged in the sequence in which they were revealed. This question is also important because it has been used by the enemies of Islam to create misunderstandings about the Qur'ān and make ridiculous conjectures about the present arrangement of the Sūrahs. They are of the opinion that "Muhammad's (Allah's peace be upon him) followers published it, without any discernible order as to chronology or otherwise; merely trying, as would seem, to put the longest chapters first ....."

Such conjectures as this are based on ignorance of the wisdom underlying the order of the Qur'ān. Though it was to be the Book for all times, it had to be revealed piecemeal in twenty-three years according to needs and requirements of the different stages through which the Islamic Movement was passing. It is obvious that the sequence of the revelations

that suited the gradual evolution of the Movement could not in any way be suitable after the completion of the Qur'ān. Allen another order, suited to the changed conditions, was needed. In the early stages of the Movement the Qur'ān addressed those people who were totally ignorant of Islam and, therefore, naturally it had first of all to teach them the basic articles of Faith. But after its completion the Qur'ān was primarily concerned with those who had accepted Islam and formed a community for carrying on the work entrusted to it by the Holy Prophet. Obviously, the order of the complete Book had to be different from its chronological order to suit the requirements of the Muslim Community for all times. Then the Qur'ān had, first of all, to acquaint the Muslims thoroughly with their duties concerning the regulation of their lives. It had also to prepare them for carrying its message to the world which was ignorant of Islam. It had also to warn them of the mischiefs and evils that appeared among the followers of the former Prophets so that they should be on their guard against them. Hence Al-Baqarah and similar Madanī Sūrahs, and not Al-'Alaq and similar Makkī Sūrahs, had to be placed in the beginning of the Qur'ān.

In this connection, another thing should also be kept in view. It does not suit the purpose of the Qur'ān that all the Sūrahs dealing with similar topics should be grouped together. In order to avoid one-sidedness at any stage of its study, it is essential that the Makkī sūrahs should intervene between the Madanī Sūrahs and that the Madanī sūrahs should follow the Makkī Sūrahs, and that the Sūrahs revealed at the earliest stages of the Movement should come between those revealed in the later stages so that the entire picture of the complete Islam should always remain before the reader. That is the wisdom of the present order.

It should also be noted that the sūrahs of the Qur'ān' were not arranged in the present order by his successors but by the Holy Prophet himself under the guidance of Allah. Whenever a Surah was revealed, he would send for one of his amanuenses and dictate it word for word and direct him to place it after such and such and before such and such a Surah. Likewise in this case of a discourse or passage or verse that was not meant to be an independent Surah by itself, he would direct him to the exact place where it was to be put in the Surah of which it was to form a part, then he used to recite the Qur'ān during the Salāt

(prescribed prayer) and on other occasions in the same order and direct his Companions to remember and recite it in the same order. Thus it is an established fact that the Sūrahs of the Qur'ān were arranged in the present order on the same day the Qur'ān was completed by the one to whom it was revealed under the guidance of the One who revealed it.

Compilation

Allah Who revealed the Qur'ān Himself made arrangements for its safety and security for ever.

No sooner was a passage of the Qur'ân revealed than it was recorded on leaves of date-palm, barks of trees, bones etc., at the dictation of the Holy Prophet and all these pieces were put in a bag. Besides this, some of his Companions themselves wrote these pieces for their own use. At the same time, the Muslims committed these passages to memory as they had to recite them during, Salāt which was obligatory from the very beginning of Islam.

Though many Companions had committed the whole of the Qur'ān to memory during the life-time of the Holy Prophet, it had not been compiled in book form. But immediately after his death, an event occurred that necessitated this work. A furious storm of apostasy broke out and many of the Companions, who went to war to. Suppress it, were killed. Among these martyrs were some of those who had committed the whole of the Qur'ān to memory. Then it occurred to Hadrat 'Umar that necessary steps should be taken to preserve the Qur'ān intact in its original form against any and every kind of danger and that it was not wise to depend exclusively upon those who had learnt it by heart. He, therefore, urged that it was essential to put the whole of it in black and white in the form of an authenticated book. He tried to impress the necessity of this step on Hadrat Abū Bakr, who at first showed hesitation to do what the Holy Prophet had not done. But after some discussion, he agreed to it. Accordingly he entrusted this work to Hadrat Zaid bin Thābit who also showed hesitation at first like Hadrat Abū Bakr and for the same reason. But at last he was convinced and he undertook this historic work.

And he was best qualified for this work. He had frequently acted as an amanuensis to the Holy Prophet and was one of those Companions who had learnt the Qur'ān directly from him. Moreover he also was

present on the occasion when the Holy Prophet recited the whole of the completed Qur'ān to angel Gabriel. Arrangements were, therefore, made to collect and gather all the written pieces of the Qur'ān left by the Holy Prophet, and those in the possession of his Companions.* Then with the co-operation of those Companions who had committed the whole or any part of the Qur'ān to memory word for word, all the written pieces were compared with each other for verification. Hadrat Zaid would not take down anything in his manuscript unless all the three sources tallied with one another. Thus was compiled one correct, authenticated and complete copy. This authenticated copy of the whole Qur'ān was kept in the house of Hadrat Hafsah Hadrat 'Umar's daughter, and one of the wives of the Holy prophet and it was proclaimed that anyone, who desired, might make a copy of it or compare with it the copy he already possessed.

As regards the sequence of the Sūrahs, Zaid followed the same order that was followed by the Holy Prophet himself because he could not and would not have followed any other. He was so particular about following the Holy Prophet in everything he did, that, at first, he hesitated to undertake the work of the compilation, just because this had not been done during the life-time of the Holy Prophet. It is, therefore wrong to suppose that the Sūrahs were arranged in the existing order after the death of the Holy Prophet. The very fact, that the Holy Prophet recited the whole of the Qur'ān twice before Gabriel during the last Ramadān** of his life, is a clear proof of the fact that he must have followed some order. And we have already cited a Tradition to the effect that Hadrat Zaid attended the second of these two last recitals. Likewise those Companions, who had committed the whole of the Qur'ān to

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*. We learn from authentic traditions that some Companions of the Holy Prophet had put the Qur'ān or some pieces of the Qur'ān in black and white during his life-time and the names of 'Uthman, Ali, 'Abdullah-bin-Masūd, 'Abdullah-bin 'Amr-bin-'Ās, Sālim, the freed slave of Huzaifah, Mu'az-bin-Jabal, Zaid-bin Thābit, Ubayy-bin-Ka'ab, Abu Zaid, Qais-bin-As-Sakn (Allah be pleased with them all) have been specifically mentioned.

**. Traditions say that the Holy Prophet used to recite the Qur'ān before angel Gabriel once during every Ramadān but he recited the whole of the complete Qur'ān twice during the Ramadān occurring in the year of his death. Zaid attended the second recitation.

memory, must have done it in some order and that, too, could not have been any other but the one followed and taught by the Holy Prophet.

Imām Mālik says, The Qur'ān was compiled in the way the Companions heard it from the Holy Prophet. Moreover, at several places, the Qur'ān speaks of itself as a Book. For example, in Sūrah Muzzammil, an early Makī revelation, Allah says to the Holy Prophet, ".....recite the Qur'ān in order....." LXXIII: 4. This also shows that the Qur'ān was meant to be a book from the beginning of the revelation and a book must follow some order.

Difference of Dialects

Though Arabic was the common language of the whole of Arabia, there existed some variations in the dialects of different parts and tribes.

For obvious reasons the Qur'ān was revealed in the dialect of the Quraish of Makkah. However, the Arabs living in different parts of the country were, at first allowed, for the sake of facility, to recite it according to the dialect of their own clan or district but this did not produce any difference in its meanings. But when Islam spread beyond the boundaries of Arabia and the Arabs came into contact with the non-Arab Muslims, the Arabic language gradually began to be influenced by its new environments. Then it was feared that the different dialects of the Qur'ān might give rise to various kinds of mischief and might cause disputes among persons having different dialects. They might even begin to accuse one another of tampering with the Qur'ān. Moreover, there was the danger that the pure and beautiful Arabic of the Qur'ān might be altered or changed by those Arabs who came in contact with non-Arabs. Therefore, Caliph 'Uthmān, in consultation with other Companions of the Holy Prophet, decided that the authenticated copies of the Qur'ān compiled by the order of Hadrat Abū Bakr, should alone be used in the whole of the Muslim world, and the use of all other copies in any other dialect or idiom should be prohibited. As a precautionary measure, he had all the other existing copies burnt to ward off any possibility of future confusion and misunderstanding. For instance, some of the companions had noted down explanatory words and comments on the margins of their copies and it was feared, that these might get mixed up with the original text of the Qur'ān. Though such a possibility did not

exist at that time, it was an act of most prudent foresight to make the Qur'ān safe and secure against any possible alteration in the future by burning all other copies.

The Qur'ān, which is now in use all over the world, is the exact copy of the Qur'ān which was compiled by the order of Hadrat Abū Bakr and copies of which were officially sent by Hadrat 'Uthmān to different places. Even today many very old copies are found in big libraries in different parts of the world and if anyone has any doubt as to whether the Qur'ān has remained absolutely safe and secure against every kind of change and alteration, he can compare any copy of the Qur'ān with any of these copies and reassure himself. Moreover, if one gets a copy of the Qur'ān from a bookseller, say, of Algeria in Africa in the West and compares it with a copy obtained from a bookseller, say, of Java in the East, one will find both the copies to be identical with each other and also with the copies of the Qur'ān made during the time of Hadrate 'Uthmān'. If even then anyone has any doubt left in his mind, he is advised to take any copy of the Qur'ān from anywhere in the world and ask anyone, out of the millions who know the Qur'ān by heart, to recite it word for word from the beginning to the end. He will find that the recitation conforms word for word to the written text. This is a clear and irrefutable proof of the fact that the Qur'ān which is in use today is the same Qur'ān which was presented to the world by Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). A sceptic might entertain a doubt about its revelation from Allah, but none can have any doubt whatsoever regarding its authenticity and immunity and purity from any and every kind of addition or omission or alteration, for there is nothing so authentic in the whole human history as this fact about the Qur'ān that it is the same Qur'ān that was presented by the Holy Prophet to the world.

Now let us consider the case of the variant readings of the Qur'ān, for their existence has created the misunderstanding that it has not remained intact. The following facts will help us to understand their nature and extent:

1. The Arabic script adopted by the amanuenses of the Holy Prophet during his life-time had neither dots nor vowel points. The same was the case with the copy of the Qur'ān compiled by Hadrat Zaid

during the time of Hadrat Abu Bakr and also with its copies circulated by Hadrat 'Uthmān.

2. Though the correctness of the Qur'ānic text was ensured in the written forms, the work of its propagation was done orally because of the general illiteracy and scarcity of paper. Little difficulty was, however, felt by the literate Arabs in deciphering this script. There were thousands of such persons who had learnt the whole of the Qur'ân by heart from the Holy Prophet himself and his Companions. They followed and taught the same reading that they had learnt from the Holy Prophet and his Companions.

3. Hadrat 'Uthmān not only sent an authenticated the Qur'ān to the different centres of Islam, but also sent a *Qārī* along with it in order to preserve that correct reading which was taught by the Holy Prophet himself.

4. With the passage of time it was felt that there should be vowel points to preserve the correct reading of the Qur'ān. Accordingly, at the instance of Zaid, the Governor of Basrah (45 to 53 A.H.) dots were assigned for vowel points. Then during the reign of Abdul-Malik (65-85 A.H.) Hajjaj-bin-Yusuf appointed scholars to assign new symbols for vowel points and dots to distinguish between the similar letters. The same practice continues to the present time.

From the above historical facts, it must have become clear that the reading of the Qur'ān (with a few minor variations) is the same as practiced and taught by the Holy Prophet. All the scholars and Qurra* of the Qur'ān have been unanimous in asserting that only that reading will be authentic which (a) conforms to the script of the copy circulated by Hadrat Uthmān and (b) complies with the lexicon of Arabic, its usages idioms and grammar, and above all, (c) is traceable by genuine and continuous links to the Holy Prophet himself. That is why there are only a few variations in its reading and those are not contradictory in their meanings but enlarge their scope and make them more comprehensive. Thus there is absolutely no doubt that the Holy Prophet himself practised

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*. Qārī is one who is well-versed in the correct reading of the Qur'ān.

*. Qurrā is the plural of Qarī.

those various readings in the instances which exist today, and they make the meanings more comprehensive.

For example, let us take the two authentic readings of (a) verse 3 of Al-Fātihah and (b) verse 6 of Al-Mā'idah. One reading of I: 3, that is, مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ means the Master of the Day of Judgement and the other reading مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ means, The Sovereign of the Day of Judgement. It is obvious that these two readings make the meaning of the verse all the more clear. (c) One reading of V: 6, that is, فَاغْسِلُوْا وُجُوْهَكُمْ ... وَاَرْجُلِكُمْ means ... wash your faces... and (wash) your feet as is done at the time of performing ablution with naked feet. The second reading, that is, فَاغْسِلُوْا وُجُوْهَكُمْ ... وَامْسَحُوْا بِرُءُوْسِكُمْ وَاَرْجُلِكُمْ wash your faces and wipe your heads and (wipe) your feet with wet hands. The second reading allows one to wipe one's feet with wet hands, provided that one had washed one's feet and put on thick socks after the performance of the previous ablution. This concession holds good for 24 hours at home and for 72 hours during a journey. It is obvious from the two instances that in the variant readings, there is absolutely no contradiction in essence. On the other hand, they make the meanings all the more comprehensive. And the same is true of all true other variant readings.

Universality

Everyone knows that the Qur'ān claims to provide guidance for the whole of mankind, but when he reads it, he finds that it is mainly addressed to the Arabs, who lived at the time of its revelation. Though at times it also addresses other people and mankind in general, it mainly discusses those things which appealed to the taste of the Arabs and were linked with their environment, history and customs. this naturally gives rise to the question: Why does the Qur'ān contain so many local and national elements of the period in which it was revealed, when it was meant for the guidance of the whole of mankind? Those who do not understand the wisdom of this, begin to argue like this: the Qur'ān was really meant for the reform of the Arabs of that period but later on, somehow or other, the claim was made that it was a guidance for the whole of mankind and for all ages.

If one does not raise this objection merely for the sake of objection but really wants to understand the matter, I would advise him

to read the Qur'ān and mark the parts which give rise to this doubt. He should then point out any tenet, idea or principle therein that might have been meant particularly for the Arabs of that period only. He should lay his finger on any moral principle, practical rule or regulation that is not of universal application and was meant only for the Arabs of that period, time and place. The mere fact, that the Qur'ān refutes the blasphemous creeds and condemns the evil customs of a particular people, living at a particular time and place and bases arguments for the unity of God on the material gathered from their environment, is not a sufficient proof to establish the allegation that its invitation and appeal was local and temporary. We should examine the question closely and decide whether what it says regarding the blasphemous people of Arabia is or is not equally true of every period and every place, and whether we can or cannot apply the same arguments with equal force to refute the blasphemy of every time and every place, and whether we can or cannot use everywhere, with minor changes, the same arguments that the Qur'ān puts forward for the Unity of God. If the answer to these questions is in the affirmative, then there is no reason why such a universal revelation should be dubbed as local or temporary, simply because it was addressed to a particular community and during a particular period. There is no philosophy, no way of life and no religion in the world which expounds, from the beginning to the end, everything in the abstract without making any reference to particular cases or concrete examples, for it is simply impossible to build a pattern of life merely in the abstract. Even if we suppose, for the sake of argument, that it were possible to do so, most surely such a system will always remain merely a theory on paper and will never take a practical shape.

Moreover, it is neither necessary nor useful to start from the very outset on international lines any ideological movement that is meant to be ultimately international. The only right method of beginning this will be to start the movement in the country of its origin and present with full force its theories and fundamental principles which are to form the basis of the required system of life. Then its exponents should impress these things on the minds of their own people who have a common language, common habits and common customs. They should first of all put these principles into practice in their own country and prove their worth by evolving a happy and successful system of life. This will naturally attract other nations, and their intelligent people will themselves come forward

to understand the movement and start it in their own countries. Thus a certain ideological system does not become national simply because it was at first presented to a particular nation and its arguments were addressed to a particular people. As a matter of fact, what distinguishes a national from an international and a temporary from a permanent system is this: a national system aims either to establish its own superiority or its special claim over other nations or presents principles and theories which, by their very nature, cannot be applied to other nations. On the other hand, an international system grants equal status and equal rights to all human beings and puts forward principles of universal application. Moreover, the principles of a temporary system become impracticable with the passage of time while the principle of a permanent system are applicable to all times. If ne studies the Qur'ān in the light of the above, one will come to the conelusion that its teachings are of universal application.

Complete Code

Another thing that causes mental confusion is the oftre peated assertion that the Qur'ān is a complete code of life. But when one reads it, one does not find detailed rules and regulations regarding social, cultural, political and economic problems etc... One is therefore, baffled to see that it does not contain any detailed regulations even about Salāt and Zakāt which are such important obligatory duties that the Qur'ān itself lays great emphasis on them over and ovcr again. That is why a casual reader cannot understand how this Book can be called a complete code. This confusion is caused because the objector loses sight of the fact that Allah did not only send down the Book but also appointed His Messenger to demonstrate its teachings by putting them into actual practice. To illustrate this, we may take the case of the construction of a building. If only a plan of the proposed building is laid down and no engineer is appointed to supervise and direct its construction, then every detail must be supplied. But if an engineer is also appointed along with the plan to construct the building on the spot, obviously there is no need for a detailed plan. In that case only a sketch with its essential features will be quite enough. It would, therefore, be wrong to find fault with such a plan as being incomplete. As Allah sent His Messenger along with the Qur'ān, only general principles and absolutely essential instructions were needed and not their details. Hence the main function

of the Qur'ān is to present clearly the intellectual and moral bases of the Islamic Way and reinforce them with arguments and appeals to the heart. As far as the practical side of the building of the Islamic Way of life is concerned, it only defines the limits and bounds of every aspect of life without giving detailed rules and regulation. Moreover it fixes sign-posts for guidance at certain important places to show how those parts are to be constructed in accordance with Allah's will. The actual work of building the Islamic Way of life in accordance with the instructions contained in the Book was entrusted the Holy Prophet, who was specially sent to set up the pattern of life for the individual for the society and for the Islamic State to be constructed practically according to the principles of the Qur'ān. Thus the Qur'ān is a complete code in the sense that it is to be taken along with the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet.

Another question which troubles the minds is that of divergence's in the interpretation of the Qur'ān. People say that 'on the one hand, Qur'ān condemns very severely those people who create differences in the Book of Allah and cause division in their religion; on the other hand, so many different interpretations of the injunctions of the Qur'ān have been made that there is hardly to be found any command with an agreed interpretation. And it is not the people of the later periods alone who differ with one another but even the great scholars of the early period, including the companions of the Holy Prophet and their followers, did not all agree in every detail in regard to Commands and Prohibitions. Do all these people then deserve the condemnation pronounced in the Qur'ān for making different interpretations? If this is not so, then what kind of differences of opinion have been condemned in the Qur'ān?

The problem is very vast and extensive and this is not the place for its detailed discussion. Suffice it to say here that *the Qur'ān is not against healthy difference of opinion in the interpretation of its injunctions provided that (a) there is agreement on the basic principles of Islam among those who differ and (b) they remain united within the fold of the Muslim Community. The Qur'ān deprecates that kind of divergence which starts with self-worship and crookedness ,and leads to disputes and sectarianism.* As the two kinds of divergence are neither alike in their nature nor in their results, they should not be placed in one and the same category. The first kind of divergence is essential for

progress and is the very soul of life and every community of intelligent and thinking people must encourage it. Its existence is a sign of life and only that community can afford to repress it which desires to have only blockheads in it. The second kind of divergence as everyone knows, disintegrates the community which nourishes it: therefore its appearance in a community is not a sign of health but a symptom of disease and it can never produce good results.

These two kinds of divergencies of opinion may further be illustrated by the following:

Supposing there are two scholars or two judges, who agree, on principle, that Allah and His Messenger alone are entitled to obedience and that the Qur'ān and the Sunnah are the final authority to determine all laws and regulations. They may then differ in the details or in the decision of a case, provided that neither of them makes his opinion as the criterion of Islam or un-Islam nor declares the other to be outside its fold on account of such a difference of opinion. They may put forward their own arguments in support of their opinions and leave the decision to the public or to the highest court, if it is some judicial matter, or to the legislative body of the community, if it concerns them. Then either one of the two different opinions will prevail or both will be accepted. But it should be noted particularly that no difference can be allowed in the basic principles of Islam nor in such matters as may lead to the formation of a new community. For instance, it would be wrong that a scholar or a jurist or a saint or a leader should form an opinion about some matter (which Allah and His Messenger do not consider to be basic) and declare it to be a basic principle of Islam and then denounce all those who differ from him to be outside its fold, and then on this basis, proceed to form a community of his own followers saying, "This is the real Muslim Community and all outside it are doomed to Hell. Therefore, if you are a Muslim, come and join it, otherwise you are not one." It is this kind of difference of opinion which the Qur'ān condemns. As regards the first kind of difference, several instances of it occurred during the time of the Holy Prophet himself. He not only permitted it but also spoke well of it, for it was a healthy sign, which showed that intelligent people of the Community were busy thinking and making research. This also showed that the intelligent people of the Community were taking interest in Islam and its teachings and were

trying to find solutions for the problems of life within Islam and not outside it. It also provided a proof of the golden rule that while the Community should remain united on principles, it should, at the same time, grant freedom of research to its thinkers within due limits so that the doors of progress should remain open.

Suggestions for Study

Finally, here are a few suggestions for the study of the Qur'ān:

As different people turn to the Qur'ān with different aims and objects, it is not possible to offer any general advice about the method of its study so as to fulfil the requirements of all. I am, however, interested only in those people who want to understand it and seek guidance from it for the solution of human problems. I will, therefore, offer some suggestions which may help satisfy their needs and remove their difficulties.

The one pre-requisite for understanding the Qur'ān is to study it with an open and detached mind. Whether one believes it to be a revealed book or not, one should, as far as possible, free one's mind of bias in favour of or against it and get rid of all pre-conceived opinions and then approach it with the sole desire of understanding it. Those people who study it with preconceived notions of their own, read only their own ideas between its lines and cannot, therefore, grasp what the Qur'ān wants to convey. It is obvious that this method of study can never be fruitful even with other books but it is utterly fruitless when applied to the study of the Qur'ān.

There is another thing which must be kept in view. If one wants to have merely a cursory acquaintance with the contents of the Qur'ān, then perhaps it might suffice for him to read it once. But, if one wishes to have a deep knowledge of it, one will have to go through it several times and each time from a different point of view. Those, who desire to make a thorough study of the Qur'ān should read it at least twice with the sole purpose of understanding, as a whole, the system of life it presents. One should also try to find out its fundamentals and the way of life it aims to build on them. During this preliminary study, if some questions occur in his mind, the reader should note them down and patiently continue his study, for he is likely to find their answers somewhere in the Qur'ān itself. If he finds answers to his questions, he

should note them down along with the questions. But if he does not find an answer to any question in his first reading, he should patiently make the second reading. I can say it in the light of my own experience that in the second reading hardly any question remains un-answered.

After getting a general insight into the Qur'ān in this way, one should begin its detailed study and take down notes of the different aspects of its teachings. For instance, one should note down what pattern of life it approves and what it disapproves. One should note down the qualities of a good man and those of a bad man, side by side, in order to bring both the patterns clearly before his mind simultaneously. Similarly, one should note down, side by side, those things which lead to the success and salvation of man and those which lead to his failure and ruin. In the same way, he should put down, under different headings, the teachings and instruction of the Qur'ān about creed, morality, duties, obligations, civilization, culture, economics, politics, law, social system, peace, war and other human problems. These notes should be consolidated to form a complete sketch of each aspect of the teachings and then fitted together to form a complete system of life.

Then, if one desires to know the Qur'ānic solution of a certain human problem he should first make study of the relevant literature, both ancient and modern, and note down the basic issues. He should also make use of the research so far made into the problem and note down the points at issue. He should then study the Qur'ān with a view to finding out the answers to those issues. I can say from my own personal experience that when one studies the Qur'ān with a view to making research into any problem, one will find an answer to it even in those verses which one had skipped over without ever imagining that it lay hidden therein.

It is suggested that each paragraph of "*The Meaning of the Qur'ān*" may be made the unit of study. At first it should be studied from the original Arabic Text with the help of some literal translation and then with the help of *The Meaning of the Qur'ān*. It is expected that the meanings of the Qur'ān will surely become clear by the grace of God.

But in spite of all these devices, one cannot grasp the inspiring spirit of the Qur'ān unless one begins to put its message into practice,

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But in spite of all these devices, one cannot grasp the inspiring spirit of the Qur'ān unless one begins to put its message into practice, for the Qur'ān is neither a book of abstract ideas and theories which may be studied in an easy chair nor is it a book of religious enigmas which may be unravelled in monasteries and universities. It is a Book that has been sent down to invite people to start a movement and to lead its followers and direct their activities towards the achievement of its mission. One has, therefore, to go to the battlefield of life to understand its real meaning. That was why a quiet and amiable person like Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) had to come out of his seclusion and start the Islamic Movement and fight against the rebellious world. It was the Qur'ān that urged him to declare war against every kind of falsehood and engage in confict with the leaders of disbelief without any consideration of the consequences. Then it attracted good souls from every home and gathered them under the banner of its leader in order to fight against the upholders of the old order who organised themselves into a gang to oppose them. During this long and bitter struggle between right and wrong, truth and falsehood, which continued for twenty three years or so, the Qur'ān went on guiding the Movement in every phase and at every stage, until it succeeded in establishing the Islamic Way of life in its perfection

It is thus obvious that one cannot possibly grasp the truths contained in the Qur'ān by the mere recitation of its words. For this purpose one must take active part in the conflict between belief and un-belief, Islam and un-Islam, truth and falsehood. One can understand it only if one takes up its Message, invites the world to accept it and moves on and on in accordance with its Guidance. Thus alone will one experience and understand all that which happened during the revelation of the Qur'ān. One will meet with the same conditions that were experienced at Makkah, Tā'if and Habash and pass through the same

kind of fire that had to be passed through at Badr, Uhd, Hunain, Tabūk etc. One will meet with Abu Jahls and Abu Lahabs and come across hypocrites, the double-faced, the Jews, in short, every type of people mentioned in the Qur'ān. Incidentally, this is a wonderful experience of its own kind and worth the trial.

While passing through any one of these stages of this experience, one will find some verses and some Sūrahs of the Qur'ān, which will themselves tell that they were revealed at such and such a stage and brought such and such instructions for the guidance of the Movement. In this way the Qur'ān will lay bare its spirit even though one might not be able to understand all the lexical meanings of its words and solve all the intricacies of grammar and rhetoric. The same formula applies to its Commandments, its moral teachings, its instructions about economics and culture and its laws regarding different aspects of human life. These things can never be understood unless they are put into practice. It is thus obvious that those individuals and communities who discard it from practical life, cannot understand its meaning and imbibe its spirit by mere lip-service to it.

This is from me and true knowledge is with Allah; I have full trust in Him and turn to Him for true guidance.

As I do not intend to discuss in the Introduction all the problems which might arise during the study of the Qur'ān, I have purposely left untouched those questions that might arise during the study of some verses or Sūrahs, for I want to deal with them in *The Meaning of the Qur'ān* at their proper places. I have taken up only those questions and problems which pertain to the general study of the Qur'ān as a whole. The reader is, therefore, requested to defer giving his final judgement on such questions till he has read the whole of *The Meaning*. Then, if he finds that some questions have not been answered at all or have not been dealt with fully, he should let me know about it for future consideration.

Abul A'alā Maudūdī


II
AL-BAQARAH
الْبَقَرَة

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الْبَقَرَة

INTRODUCTION

Name:

This Sūrah has been named "Al-Baqarah" from the story of the Cow occurring in it in (vv. 67-73). Each Sūrah of the Qur'ān discusses such numerous and vast themes that no comprehensive titles can be proposed for them corresponding to the themes. In spite of its richness in vocabulary, Arabic after all is a human language. The languages spoken by man suffer from such limitations that they cannot provide the words or phrases which may become suitable and comprehensive titles for these vast themes. Therefore, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) under Divine guidance proposed names instead of titles for most of the Qur'ānic Sūrahs, which serve only as symbols. This Sūrah has been called Al-Baqarah not because it discusses the subject of the cow, but it implies that it is a Sūrah in which the cow has been mentioned.

Sequence:

Though it is a Madani Surah, it follows naturally a Makki Surah *Al-Fatihah,* which ends with the prayer: "Show us the straight way". It begins with the answer to that prayer, "This is the Book (that) ...is guidance.."

Period of Revelation:

The greater part of this Sūrah was revealed after the *Hijrah* during the earliest stage of the Holy Prophet's life at Madinah. The smaller part which was revealed later was included in it because of the relevance of the contents; so much so that the verses prohibiting interest were also included in it although they were sent down during the very last period of the Holy Prophet's life. For the same reason, the concluding verses (vv. 284-286) which had been revealed at Makkah before the *Hijrah* were also included in it.

Historical Background:

In order to understand the meaning of this Sūrah, we should first understand its historical background well.

1. Before the *Hijrah* at Makkah the message of Islam was mostly addressed to the polytheistic Arabs for whom it was a new and unfamiliar thing, but after the *Hijrah* it was also concerned with the Jews, whose settlements adjoined Madinah. They believed in the creed of the Unity of Allah, Prophethood, Revelation, the Hereafter and angels and also in the law which was revealed by Allah to their Prophet Moses (peace be on him), and in principle, their religion was the same Islām that was being taught by the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace). But they had strayed away from it during centuries of continuous degeneration, their creed had been corrupted by many un-Islāmic elements which had no basis in the Torah, and they had adopted many un-Islāmic creeds, rites and customs which did not belong to the original Islām and for which there was no sanction in the Torah. Not only this: they had tampered with the Torah by inserting their own explanations and interpretations into its text. They had distorted even that part of the Word of God, which had remained intact in their scriptures and taken out of it the real spirit of true faith and were now clinging to a lifeless frame of rituals. Consequently, the beliefs, morals and conduct of their rabbis, religious guides, chiefs and common people had gone to the lowest depths of degeneration. The pity is that they were not only satisfied with their condition but loved to cling to it. Besides, they had no intention or inclination to accept any kind of reform. So they became bitter enemies of those who came to teach them the Right Way and did whatever they could to defeat every such effort. Though they were Muslims originally, they had swerved from the real Islām and made innovations and alterations in it and had fallen victims to hair-splitting and sectarianism. They had forgotten and forsaken Allah and begun to serve mammon. So much so that they had even given up their original name "Muslim" and adopted the name "Jew" instead, and had made religion the sole monopoly and heritage of the children of Israel.

So, when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) arrived in Madinah, he was instructed by Allah to invite them to the original, true faith. That is why more than one-third of this Sūrah has been addressed to the children of Israel. A critical review of their history, their moral

degeneration and their religious perversions has been made; side by side with this the high standard of morality and the fundamental principles of the true religion have been put forward in order to bring out clearly the nature of the degeneration of the community of a Prophet when it goes astray and to draw clear lines of demarcation between real piety and formalism, and the essentials and the non-essentials of the true religion.

2. At Makkah Islām was mainly concerned with the propagation of its fundamental principles and the moral training of its followers. But after the migration of the Holy Prophet to Madinah, where Muslims had come to settle from all over Arabia and where a tiny Islāmic State had been set up with the help of the Ansar (local Muslims), naturally the Qur'ān had to turn its attention to the social, cultural, economic, political and legal problems as well. This accounts for the difference between the themes of the Sūrahs revealed at Makkah and those at Madinah. Accordingly about half of this Sūrah deals with those principles and regulations which are essential for the integration and solidarity of a community and for the solution of its problems.

3. After the migration to Madinah, the struggle between Islām and un-Islām had also entered a new phase. Before this the believers, who propagated Islām among their own clans and tribes, had to face its opponents at their own risk. But the conditions had changed at Madinah, where Muslims from all parts of Arabia had come and settled as one community, and had established an independent city state. Here it became an struggle for the survival of the community itself, for the whole of non-Muslim Arabia was bent upon and united in crushing it totally. Hence the following instructions, upon which depended not only its success but also its very survival, were revealed in this Surah :-

(a) The Community should work with the utmost zeal to propagate its ideology and win over to its side the greatest possible number of people.

(b) It should so expose its opponents as to leave no room for doubt in the mind of any sensible person that they were adhering to an absolutely wrong position.

(c) It should infuse in its members (the majority of whom were homeless and indigent and surrounded on all sides by enemies) courage and fortitude so indispensable to their very existence in the

adverse circumstances in which they were struggling and prepare them to face these boldly.

(d) It should also keep them ready and prepared to meet any armed menace, which might come from any side to suppress and crush their ideology, and to oppose it tooth and nail without minding the overwhelming numerical strength and the material resources of its enemies.

(e) It should also create in them the courage which is needed for the eradication of the corrupt ways of ignorance by force if the Arabs do not accept by education the new system which Islām aims to establish.

That is why Allah in this Sūrah has revealed such initial instructions as may help achieve all the above mentioned objects.

4. During this period, a new type of "Muslims," *munafiqin* (hypocrites), had begun to appear. Though signs of duplicity had been noticed during the last days at Makkah, they took a different shape at Madinah. At Makkah there were some people who professed Islām to be true but were not prepared to abide by the consequences of this profession and to sacrifice their worldly interests and relations and bear the afflictions which inevitably follow the acceptance of this creed. But at Madinah, besides these some other kinds of *munafiqin* also began to appear. There were some who denied Islām, but had entered the Islāmic fold merely to harm it from within. There were others who were surrounded by Muslims and, therefore, had become "Muslims" to safeguard their worldly interests. They, therefore, continued to have relations with the enemies so that if the latter became successful, their interests should remain secure. There were still others who had no strong conviction of the truth of Islām but had embraced it along with the people of their families and clans. Lastly, there were those who were intellectually convinced of the truth of Islām but did not have enough moral courage to give up their former traditions, superstitions and customs of ignorance, and live up to the Islāmic moral standards, bear responsibilities and make sacrifices in its way.

At the time of the revelation of Al-Baqarah, all sorts of the hypocrites had begun to appear. Allah has, therefore, briefly pointed out their characteristics here. Afterwards when their evil characteristics and

mischievous deeds became manifest, Allah sent down detailed instructions to deal with them separately.

SUMMARY

Theme: Guidance

This Sūrah is an invitation to the Divine Guidance and all the stories, incidents etc., revolve round this central theme. As this Surah has particularly been addressed to the Jews, many historical events have been cited from their own traditions to admonish and advise them that their own good lies in accepting the Guidance revealed to the Holy Prophet. They should, therefore, be the first to accept it because it was basically the same that was revealed to Prophet Moses (Allah's peace be upon him).

Topics and their Interconnections

1-20 These introductory verses declare the Qur'ān to be the Book of Guidance: enunciate the articles of the Faith--- belief in Allah, Prophethood and Life-after-death; divide mankind into three main groups with regard to its acceptance or rejection-Believers, disbelievers and hypocrites.

21-29 Allah invites mankind to accept the Guidance voluntarily and to submit to Him, the Lord and the Creator of the Universe and to believe in the Qur'ān, His Guidance, and in the Life-after-death.

30-39 The story of the appointment of Adam as Allah's Vicegerent on Earth, of his life in the Garden, of his falling a prey to the temptations of Satan, of his repentance and its acceptance, has been related to show to mankind (Adam's offspring), that the only right thing for them is to accept and follow the Guidance, This story also shows that the Guidance of Islam is the same that was given to Adam and that it is the original religion of mankind.

40-120 In this portion invitation to the Guidance has particularly been extended to the children of Israel and their past and present attitude has been criticised to show that the cause of their degradation was their deviation from the Guidance.

121-141 The Jews have been exhorted to follow Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be Upon him) who had come with the same Guidance and who was a descendant and follower of Prophet Abraham whom

they highly honoured as their ancestor, and professed to follow as a prophet. The story of the building of the Ka'abah by him has been mentioned because it was going to be made the *qiblah* of the Muslim Community.

In this portion, the declaration of the change of *qiblah* from the Temple (Jerusalem) to the Ka'abah (Makkah) has been made as a symbol of the change of leadership from the children of Israel to the Muslim Community, which has also been fore-warned to guard against those transgressions against the Guidance that had led to the deposition of the Jews. 142-152

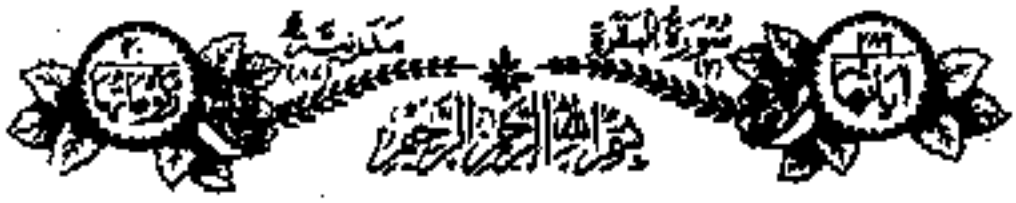
In this portion practical measures have been prescribed to enable the Muslims to discharge the heavy responsibilities of the leadership that had been entrusted to them for the promulgation of the Guidance. Salāt, Fast, Zakāt, Haj and Jihād have been prescribed for the moral training of the *Ummah!* The Believers have been exhorted to obey authority, to be just, to fulfil pledges, to observe treaties, to spend wealth etc., in the way of Allah. Laws rules and regulations have been laid down for their organisation, cohesion and conduct of day-to-day life and for the solution of social, economic, political and international problems; on the other hand, drinking, gambling, lending money on interest etc., have been prohibited to keep the *Ummah* safe from disintegration. In between these, the basic articles of the Faith have been reiterated at suitable places, for these alone can enable and support one to stick to the Guidance. 153-251

These verses serve as an introduction to the prohibition of lending money on interest. The true conception of Allah, Revelation and Life-after-death has been emphasised to keep alive the sense of accountability. The stories of Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) and of the one who woke up after a sleep of hundred years have been related to show that Allah is All-Powerful and is able to raise the dead and call them to account. The Believers, therefore, should keep this fact in view and refrain from taking interest on money. 252-260

The theme of 153-251 has been resumed and the Believers have been exhorted to spend in the way of Allah in order to please Him alone. In contrast to this, they have been warned against the evils of lending money on interest. Instructions have also been given for the 261-283

honest conduct of day-to-day business transactions.

284-286 The basic articles of the Faith have been recapitulated here at the end of the Surah, just as they were enunciated at its beginning. Then the Surah ends with a prayer which the Muslim Community needed very much at that time when they were encountering untold hardships in the propagation of the Guidance.



الجزء ١

معانقة ١ الٓمّٓ ۝١ ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ ۛ فِيْهِ ۛ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ۝٢ الَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ
بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنٰهُمْ يُنْفِقُوْنَ ۝٣ وَالَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ
بِمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكَ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ ۚ وَبِالْاٰخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوْقِنُوْنَ ۝٤

II

AL - BAQARAH

اَلْبَقَرَة

Verses: 286 *Revealed at Al-Madinah*

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Alif. Lām. Mim.[1] This is the Book of Allah: there is no doubt[2] about it. It is guidance to Godfearing people,[3] who believe in the unseen,[4] establish the Salāt[5] and expend (in Our way) out of what We have bestowed on them;[6] who believe in the Book We have sent down to you (*i.e.* the Qur'ān) and in the Books sent down before you,[7] and firmly believe in the Hereafter.[8] 1-4

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1. Letters of the Arabic alphabet like Alif, Lam, Mim, called the *muqatta'at*, which are pre-fixed to a number of the Sūrahs of the Qur'ān, were in common use in the Arabic literature of the period when the Qur'ān was revealed. The poets and rhetoricians made use of this style, and instances of this can even be found in the pre-Islāmic prose and poetry which has survived. As their significance was appreciated by all concerned, none objected to or questioned their use, because it was no enigma to them. Even the bitterest opponents of the Qur'ān, who never missed an opportunity, did not raise any objection against their use. But as their use was abandoned with the passage of time, it became difficult for the commentators to determine their exact meaning and significance. An ordinary

reader, however, need not worry about their meanings because they make no difference as far as the Guidance of the Qur'ān is concerned.

2. Its simple meaning is: "No doubt, this is the Book of Allah", but it may also imply that this is the Book which contains nothing doubtful. It is not like the common books on metaphysics and religion which are based on mere speculation and guess-work. Therefore even their authors cannot be free from doubts concerning their own theories, in spite of their assertion that they are convinced of them. In contrast to them, this Book is based on the Truth: its Author is He Who possesses full knowledge of the Reality. Therefore, there is indeed no room for doubt about its contents.

3. That is, though there is nothing but guidance in this Book, there are a few pre-requisites for benefiting from it. The first pre-requisite is that one should be inclined to avoid vice, and should seek and practise virtue. But there is no guidance in the Qur'ān for the people who do not bother to consider whether what they are doing is right or wrong, who follow the ways of the world or their own whims and lusts or move aimlessly in the ways of life.

4. The second condition for obtaining guidance from the Qur'ān is that one must believe in the "unseen" -- those realities which cannot be perceived by the senses and which do not come within human experience and observation, *e.g.* the essence and attributes of Allah, Angels, Revelation, Heaven, Hell, etc. These things must be taken on trust from the experts (Prophets) just as we do in many cases in the physical world. Therefore, only such a person, who believes in the "unseen", can benefit from the Guidance of the Qur'ān. As for the one who believes only in those things which can be seen, tasted and smelt, or can be measured and weighed, cannot get any guidance from this Book.

5. The third condition to benefit from the Qur'ān is that one should be willing and ready to put into practice the teachings of the Qur'ān. As the *Salāt* (Prayer) is the first and foremost obligatory duty enjoined by the Qur'ān, it is the practical proof and permanent test of the sincerity of one's Faith. Therefore, after a person's profession of Islām, the moment he hears the call to the Prayer (which sounds regularly five times a day from every mosque in the Muslim world), he should join the congregation for the *Salāt*, because this determines whether he is sincere in his profession or not. If he does not attend to the call and join the congregation, it is an indication that he is not sincere in his profession.

It must also be noted that *"iqama-tus-Salāt"* (the establishment of Prayer) is the comprehensive term. It means that *Salāt* should be performed in congregation and that permanent arrangements should be made for it in every

habitation; otherwise *Salāt* will not be considered to have been established, even if every inhabitant of a place offers the *Salāt* individually.

6. The fourth condition to benefit from the Qur'ān is that one should be willing to part with one's money according to the instructions of the Book in order to render the rights of Allah and Man and should make monetary sacrifices for the cause of Islām which he has accepted.

7. The fifth condition is that one should believe in the truth of all those Books which Allah sent down by Revelation to the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be His peace and blessings) and the Prophets before him at different times in different countries. Those who do not believe in any kind of guidance from Allah, cannot at all benefit from the guidance of the Qur'ān. Likewise those who profess to believe in the necessity of guidance from Allah but do not turn to Revelation and the Prophets for it, or who dub their own theories as "divine light", cannot obtain any guidance from it. Moreover, guidance is also denied to those who believe only in that revealed Book or Books in which their forefathers believed and reject all other guidance received from the same Source. Apart from all such people, the Qur'ān guides only those who believe that they stand in need of Divine Guidance as well as admit that it does not come to every man individually but reaches humanity only through the Prophets and revealed Books. Then those who want guidance should not be slaves to any racial or national prejudices but should be seekers after truth and should submit to it wherever and in whatever form they find it.

8. This is the sixth and last condition. "Hereafter" is a comprehensive word which applies to the collection of many beliefs, which are as follows:

(a) Man has not been created irresponsible in the world but he is answerable to Allah for all his deeds here.

(b) The present world order is not everlasting, but has to come to an end at a time only known to Allah.

(c) After the present order has been brought to an end, Allah will create a new world, when He will bring back to life all human beings, born from the beginning of creation till Resurrection, simultaneously and will call them to account for their deeds, and then will reward them justly accordingly to what they had done in the world.

(d) Those, who will be judged as good by Allah, will go to Paradise, and those who will be judged as bad will be cast into Hell.

(e) The criterion of success or failure is not the prosperity or adversity of this worldly life, but successful in actual fact will be he who comes out successful in Allah's final judgement, and failure he who is a failure there.

[Contd. on p.56

أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٦﴾ خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ
قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِمْ ۖ وَعَلَىٰ أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةٌ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾
وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَبِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُم بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨﴾
يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ۚ وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾
فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ ۙ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۢ بِمَا كَانُوا
يَكْذِبُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۙ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ
مُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١١﴾ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَٰكِن لَّا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ وَإِذَا
قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ قَالُوا أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَا آمَنَ السُّفَهَاءُ ۗ أَلَا
إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ وَلَٰكِن لَّا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا
آمَنَّا ۖ وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ ۙ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿١٤﴾
اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ
اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبِحَت تِّجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٦﴾
مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا ۖ فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ
بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا
يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ ۚ يَجْعَلُونَ
أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِم مِّنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ
بِالْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ ۖ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُم مَّشَوْا
فِيهِ ۖ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ

Such people are on the right way from their Lord and such are truly successful. 5

As for those who have rejected[9] (these things), it is all the same to them whether you warn them or do not warn them: they are not going to believe. Allah has sealed up their hearts and ears and a covering has fallen over their eyes,[10] and they have incurred the severest punishment. 6-7

Then there are some who say, "We believe in Allah and the Last Day", whereas they do not believe at all. They thus try to deceive Allah and the Believers, but they succeed in deceiving none except themselves and they realize it not.[11] In their hearts is a disease which Allah has increased all the more[12] and a painful doom is in store for them for the lie they utter. Whenever it is said to them, "Spread not disorder on the earth", their reply is, "We only seek to put things aright". - Beware! they do spread disorder but they realize it not. And when it is said to them, "Believe sincerely as the other people have believed",[13] they reply, "Should we believe as fools have believed?"[14] Beware! they themselves are the fools, but they know it not. When they meet those who believe, they say, "We, too, are believers", but when they privily meet their evil geniuses,[15] they say, "Indeed we are with you: we are only mocking at these people". -- (Little do they realize that) Allah is mocking at them. He gives them rope enough, and they wander on and on blindly in their mischief and rebellion. These are the people who have bartered away Guidance for error, but this is a profitless bargain that they have made, and they are not at all on the right way. 8-16

Their condition may be described in a parable: a man kindled a fire and when it illuminated all around him, Allah took away the light from their eyes and left them in utter darkness, where they could not see anything.[16] They are deaf; they are dumb; they are blind[17] so they will not return (to the right way). Or (still another parable may be cited to depict their condition): heavy rain is falling from the sky, accompanied by pitch darkness, thunder and lightning. When they hear the thunderclap, they thrust their fingers into their ears for fear of death, but Allah is encircling the disbelievers on all sides.[18] The lightning terrifies them as if it were going to snatch away their eye-sight from them. When they see light, they move on a little further and 17-20

when it becomes dark for them, they stand still.[19] Had Allah so willed, He could have deprived them totally of their hearing[20] and their sight. Most surely Allah has power over everything.'

Contd. from p.53]

Those who do not believe in the life-after-death with the above implications, cannot benefit from the Qur'ān because the one who entertains even the slightest doubt about these, not to speak of rejecting them, can never follow the way of life which the Qur'ān prescribes.

9. That is, they refused to believe and fulfil all or any of the above-mentioned six conditions.

10. It does not mean that Allah had sealed up their hearts, so they refused to believe. But it means that when they rejected the above-mentioned pre-requisites of belief and chose and adopted for themselves a way contrary to the one presented by the Qur'ān, Allah sealed up their hearts and ears. The Qur'ān simply states a law of Nature: if one takes a biased view of something and deliberately nourishes prejudices against it in his mind, he can neither see any virtue in it nor hear anything in its favour nor open his heart to consider it dispassionately. This is the law of Nature and, as it is Allah's law, the act of sealing up of the hearts and the ears and the covering of the eyes has been attributed to Him.

11. They deceive themselves by imagining that their duplicity will safeguard their interests but obviously their policy will prove harmful in this world as well as in the next. A hypocrite might succeed in deceiving some people for some time but he cannot deceive all people for all times. When such a person is exposed, he loses all honour once and for all. As to the Hereafter, mere lip-service will carry no weight there because it is deeds alone that matter there.

12. "A disease": the disease of hypocrisy; and "Allah is increasing their disease all the more" means that He does not punish the hypocrites for their hypocrisy immediately, but gives them respite so that when their duplicity appears to succeed apparently they become more and more convinced of its efficiency and they go on becoming more and more hypocritical in their attitude and conduct.

13. That is, "Just as the other people of your nation have accepted Islām truly and sincerely, so should you also accept it truly and honestly, if you profess to accept it."

14. They regarded as fools the people who had accepted Islām sincerely and exposed themselves to troubles, hardships and dangers. In their opinion it was nothing but folly to earn the hostility of the whole country merely for the sake of

truth and righteousness. They considered it wisdom not to bother about the right and the wrong at all but to look only after one's own interests.

15. *Shayatin* plural of *Shaitān*, is an insurgent, haughty and devilish person, or an evil genius. This word is used both for the men and the jinn. Though it has mostly been used in the Qur'ān for the jinn devils, in some places it has also been applied to human devils, and from the context it can easily be judged where it refers to human and where to jinn devils. Here it refers to the Arab chiefs who were in the fore-front in their opposition to Islām.

16. The parable means that when a person, Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), spread the light of Truth that discriminated right from wrong and virtue from vice, those who used their faculties properly began to distinguish between these things. But the hypocrites, who were blinded by self-interest, could not see the right path even with the help of this light.

"Allah took away the light from their eyes" should not cause one the misunderstanding that the responsibility of not seeing the truth did not lie on them. Allah deprives of the sight only him who is not himself a seeker after truth, who chooses error for himself instead of guidance, who shuts his eyes to the truth. When they themselves turned away from the light of truth and chose to wander only in the darkness of falsehood, Allah also let them go astray.

17. "Deaf" to hear the Truth, "dumb" to speak the Truth and "blind" to see the Truth.

18. By thrusting their fingers into their ears, they delude themselves for a while that they have escaped destruction. But they cannot, in fact, save themselves because Allah, with all His powers, is encircling them on all sides.

19. The first parable depicts those hypocrites who in their inmost hearts did not believe in Islām at all, but had become 'Muslims' for the sake of self-interest or expediency. The second parable gives a description of those hypocrites who were suffering from doubt, suspicion and lack of faith. Though they were not wholly unbelievers, they practised Islām only to the extent which might not involve them in trouble. In this parable rainfall stands for Islām which came as a blessing to humanity; pitch darkness, thunder and lightning stand for the impending obstacles, the threatening dangers and the glaring difficulties which were being experienced on account of the strong resistance from the opponents of Islām. When the situation eased a little, they began to move onward on the path of Islām, but when the clouds of difficulties began to appear, or when they were given such commands as were against their self-interest or their superstitious beliefs and prejudices, they again stood still in sheer perplexity.

[Contd. on p. 60

وَ اَبْصَارِهِمْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَیْءٍ قَدِیْرٌ ﴿۲۰﴾ یٰۤاَیُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوْا رَبَّكُمُ
الَّذِیْ خَلَقَكُمْ وَ الَّذِیْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿۲۱﴾ الَّذِیْ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ
الْاَرْضَ فِرَاشًا وَّ السَّمَآءَ بِنَآءً ۪ وَّ اَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَاَخْرَجَ بِهٖ مِنَ
الثَّمَرٰتِ رِزْقًا لَّكُمْ ۚ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوْا لِلّٰهِ اَنْدَادًا وَّ اَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۲۲﴾ وَ اِنْ
كُنْتُمْ فِیْ رَیْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلٰى عَبْدِنَا فَاْتُوْا بِسُوْرَةٍ مِّنْ مِّثْلِهٖ ۪ وَ ادْعُوْا
شُهَدَآءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِیْنَ ﴿۲۳﴾ فَاِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوْا وَ لَنْ
تَفْعَلُوْا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِیْ وَقُوْدُهَا النَّاسُ وَ الْحِجَارَةُ ۚ اُعِدَّتْ لِلْكٰفِرِیْنَ ﴿۲۴﴾
وَ بَشِّرِ الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ عَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ اَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِیْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْاَنْهٰرُ ؕ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوْا مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرَةٍ رِّزْقًا ۙ قَالُوْا هٰذَا الَّذِیْ رُزِقْنَا
مِنْ قَبْلُ ۙ وَ اُتُوْا بِهٖ مُتَشَابِهًا ؕ وَ لَهُمْ فِیْهَاۤ اَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ ۙ وَّ هُمْ
فِیْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿۲۵﴾ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا یَسْتَحْیٖۤ اَنْ یَّضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَّا بَعُوْضَةً
فَمَا فَوْقَهَا ؕ فَاَمَّا الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا فَیَعْلَمُوْنَ اَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ۚ وَ
اَمَّا الَّذِیْنَ كَفَرُوْا فَیَقُوْلُوْنَ مَا ذَاۤ اَرَادَ اللّٰهُ بِهٰذَا مَثَلًا ۘ یُضِلُّ بِهٖ
كَثِیْرًا ۙ وَّ یَهْدِیْ بِهٖ كَثِیْرًا ؕ وَ مَا یُضِلُّ بِهٖۤ اِلَّا الْفٰسِقِیْنَ ﴿۲۶﴾ الَّذِیْنَ
یَنْقُضُوْنَ عَهْدَ اللّٰهِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مِیْثَاقِهٖ ۪ وَ یَقْطَعُوْنَ مَاۤ اَمَرَ اللّٰهُ بِهٖۤ اَنْ
یُّوْصَلَ وَ یُفْسِدُوْنَ فِی الْاَرْضِ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ ﴿۲۷﴾ كَیْفَ تَكْفُرُوْنَ
بِاللّٰهِ وَ كُنْتُمْ اَمْوَاتًا فَاَحْیَاكُمْ ۚ ثُمَّ یُمِیْتُكُمْ ثُمَّ یُحْیِیْكُمْ ثُمَّ اِلَیْهِ
تُرْجَعُوْنَ ﴿۲۸﴾ هُوَ الَّذِیْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِی الْاَرْضِ جَمِیْعًا ۚ ثُمَّ اسْتَوٰۤى
اِلَى السَّمَآءِ فَسَوّٰىهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمٰوٰتٍ ؕ وَ هُوَ بِكُلِّ شَیْءٍ عَلِیْمٌ ﴿۲۹﴾ وَ اِذْ

O Mankind,[21] submit to your Lord Who created you and those 21-22
who were before you; in this way only you may expect to save yourselves.[22] It is He Who has made the earth a bed for you and the sky a canopy; and it is He Who sends down rain from above for the growth of every kind of food products for your sustenance. So, when you know this, you should not set up equals to rank with Allah.[23]

And if you be in doubt whether the Book We have sent down to 23-24
Our Servant is from Us or not, then produce, at least, one Sūrah like this.[24] You may call all your associates to assist you and avail yourselves of the help of any one other than Allah. If you are genuine in your doubt, do this. But if you do not do this, and you can never do this, then fear the Fire which has been prepared for the disbelievers and which shall have men and stones for fuel.[25]

And give good news (O Muhammad), to those who believe in 25
this Book and do good deeds (in accordance with its teachings). For them there will be gardens underneath which canals flow. Their fruits will so resemble the fruits on the Earth that every time they will be provided with fruits, they will say, "Such fruits were provided to us before on the Earth."[26] And there will be pure spouses[27] for them and therein they will live for ever.

Well, Allah is not ashamed to cite the similitude of a gnat or of 26-27
something even more insignificant than this.[28] As for those who believe, they come to know from the same similitude that it is the Revelation from their Lord; but those who disbelieve, say, "What does Allah mean by such similitudes?"[29] Allah leads astray many and guides many to the right way by the same thing.[30] And He leads astray only those who disobey Allah; who break Allah's covenant after ratifying it;[31] who cut asunder what Allah has ordered to be joined,[32] and who produce chaos on the Earth.[33] These are the people who are indeed the losers.

How is it that you adopt the attitude of disbelief towards Allah 28-29
when the fact is that you were lifeless and He gave you life, and He will take away life from you and will again restore you to life: then you shall ultimately return to Him. He it is Who created for you all that there is on the Earth; He then turned to the sky and ordered it into

seven heavens.[34] And He has full knowledge of everything.[35]

Contd. from p.57

20. That is, Allah could, if He so willed, totally deprive these hypocrites also of the power to see the Truth just as He deprived the hypocrites described in the first parable. But Allah does not do so because it is His will to give them respite to see the Truth and hear the Truth to the extent they want to see and hear it. That is why He left them with only as much power as they made use of in seeing and hearing the Truth.

21. Though the Qur'ān invites all human beings to its message, to benefit or not to benefit from it depends on whether the people are really willing and inclined to benefit from it and on Allah's grace accordingly. Therefore, in the preceding verses distinction has been made between the people to show as to which of them can benefit from the guidance of this Book and which cannot. Now, the actual message for which the Qur'ān was revealed is presented before all mankind.

22. From errors of judgement and action in the world and from the punishment of God in the Hereafter.

23. That is, "When you yourselves admit and acknowledge that all this has been done only by Allah, then you should serve and worship Him alone." "To set up others to equal in rank with Allah" means to hold others besides Allah as worthy of some kind of service and worship. As will be explained by the Qur'ān below, there are certain kinds of worship which should exclusively be performed for the sake of Allah; associating others with these is the *shirk* for the eradication of which the Qur'ān was sent down.

24. This challenge had been given several times in the Qur'ān at Makkah. It was meant to convince the opponents that the Qur'ān is Divine Word and could not be produced by human mind. Now it was reiterated at Madinah. (See Yunus, X: 38-39, Hud XI: 13-14).Bani Israel XVII: 88, At Tur LII: 33-34).

25. The allusion means: "You alone will not become fuel for Hell, but the idols of stone which you worship as deities in the world, will also be there with you to show that they had no share whatever in Godhead."

26. It will be a pleasant surprise for the dwellers of Paradise to have fruits just like the ones with which they were familiar on the earth. Of course, they will be much more delicious. For instance, they will be like mangoes, pomegranates, oranges, etc., in shape and colour and the dwellers of Paradise will at once recognize them as such but they will be infinitely more delicious than the mangoes, pomegranates and oranges of the world.

27. The word *azwaj* (sing. *zauj*) as used in the original is used both for the husband and for the wife: the wife is *zauj* for the husband, and the husband *zauj* for the wife. In Paradise the spouses will be joined on the basis of piety. For instance, if a certain man lived a pious life in this world, but his wife did not, their marriage will be dissolved in the Hereafter, and the pious man will be united with another pious woman whose marriage had similarly been dissolved and so on. But if both the husband and the wife led pious lives here, they will continue to live as husband and wife for ever in Paradise.

28. Here an objection has been answered without making mention of it. The objection was that if the Qur'ān had been the Book of Allah, it would not have adduced illustrations from such insignificant things as gnats, spiders, ants, bees, etc.

29. Those people who do not want to understand the Reality and do not seek the Truth, get entangled in the words of such similitudes, draw wrong conclusions and go astray from the Truth on account of their own perversion. On the contrary, the seekers-after-truth, who are possessed of insight, ponder over the wisdom contained in them and are convinced that these sublime things can only be from Allah.

30. *"Fasiq"*: disobedient, the one who transgresses the bounds set by Allah.

31. The edicts or instructions issued by a sovereign to his subjects are called *'ahd* according to the Arabic idiom, because they are obligatory on them. In this verse the word *'ahd* has been used in the same sense. Allah's *'ahd* is His standing command to mankind to submit to Him, to obey Him and worship Him alone. The ratification of the same refers to the covenant to which the whole of mankind agreed at the creation of Adam: it was that they would submit to Allah. (For further details, please refer to Al-A'raf; VII: 172).

32. That is, these people break off the relations which Allah has enjoined to be established and upon the estblishment and strength of which depends man's individual and collective well-being. This concise sentence is so vast in meaning that it covers the whole of the moral world, ranging from relations between two persons to international relations.

"Breaking off relations" not only implies violation of human relations but it also implies abuse of relations in any way, because the result will be the same if and when these relations are not observed rightly and properly. The Qur'ān, therefore, abhors not only their violation but also their abuse as it causes chaos, conflict and disorder in the world.

[Contd. on p.64

قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اِنِّیْ جَاعِلٌ فِی الْاَرْضِ خَلِیْفَةً ؕ قَالُوْٓا اَتَجْعَلُ فِیْهَا
مَنْ یُّفْسِدُ فِیْهَا وَیَسْفِكُ الدِّمَآءَ ۚ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ
لَكَ ؕ قَالَ اِنِّیْٓ اَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿30﴾ وَعَلَّمَ اٰدَمَ الْاَسْمَآءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ
عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ ۙ فَقَالَ اَنْۢبِـُٔوْنِیْ بِاَسْمَآءِ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِیْنَ ﴿31﴾
قَالُوْا سُبْحٰنَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَآ اِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا ؕ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْعَلِیْمُ الْحَكِیْمُ ﴿32﴾ قَالَ
یٰٓاٰدَمُ اَنْۢبِئْهُمْ بِاَسْمَآئِهِمْ ۚ فَلَمَّآ اَنْۢبَاَهُمْ بِاَسْمَآئِهِمْ ۙ قَالَ اَلَمْ اَقُلْ لَّكُمْ
اِنِّیْٓ اَعْلَمُ غَیْبَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۙ وَاَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُوْنَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ
تَكْتُمُوْنَ ﴿33﴾ وَاِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اسْجُدُوْا لِاٰدَمَ فَسَجَدُوْٓا اِلَّآ اِبْلِیْسَ ؕ
اَبٰى وَاسْتَكْبَرَ ۫ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكٰفِرِیْنَ ﴿34﴾ وَقُلْنَا یٰٓاٰدَمُ اسْكُنْ اَنْتَ وَ
زَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَیْثُ شِئْتُمَا ۪ وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هٰذِهِ
الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُوْنَا مِنَ الظّٰلِمِیْنَ ﴿35﴾ فَاَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّیْطٰنُ عَنْهَا فَاَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا
كَانَا فِیْهِ ۪ وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوْا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۚ وَلَكُمْ فِی الْاَرْضِ
مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَّمَتَاعٌ اِلٰى حِیْنٍ ﴿36﴾ فَتَلَقّٰٓى اٰدَمُ مِنْ رَّبِّهٖ كَلِمٰتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَیْهِ ؕ
اِنَّهٗ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِیْمُ ﴿37﴾ قُلْنَا اهْبِطُوْا مِنْهَا جَمِیْعًا ۚ فَاِمَّا یَاْتِیَنَّكُمْ
مِّنِّیْ هُدًى فَمَنْ تَبِعَ هُدَایَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَیْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ یَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿38﴾
وَالَّذِیْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَكَذَّبُوْا بِاٰیٰتِنَآ اُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمْ فِیْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿39﴾
یٰبَنِیْٓ اِسْرَآءِیْلَ اذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتِیَ الَّتِیْٓ اَنْعَمْتُ عَلَیْكُمْ وَاَوْفُوْا بِعَهْدِیْٓ
اُوْفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ ۚ وَاِیَّایَ فَارْهَبُوْنِ ﴿40﴾ وَاٰمِنُوْا بِمَآ اَنْزَلْتُ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ
وَلَا تَكُوْنُوْٓا اَوَّلَ كَافِرٍ بِهٖ ۪ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوْا بِاٰیٰتِیْ ثَمَنًا قَلِیْلًا ۫ وَّاِیَّایَ

Just[36] recall the time when your Lord said to the angels,[37] "I am going to appoint a vicegerent[38] on the Earth." They humbly enquired, "Are you going to appoint such a one as will cause disorder and shed blood on the Earth?[39] We are already engaged in hymning Your praise, and hallowing Your name."[40] Allah replied, "I know what you do not know."[41] After this he taught Adam the names of all things.[42] Then He set these before the angels and asked, "Tell Me the names of these things, if you are right (in thinking that the appointment of a vicegerent will cause disorder)". They replied, "Glory be to You. You alone are free from defect. We possess only that much knowledge which You have given us.[43] Indeed You alone are All-Knowing and All-Wise." Then Allah said to Adam, "Tell them the names of these things." When Adam told them the names of all those things,[44] Allah declared, "Did I not tell you that I know those truths about the Earth and the Heavens which are hidden from you? I know what you disclose and what you hide." 30-33

Then We commanded the angels, "Bow yourselves to Adam." All bowed[45] but *Iblis*[46] refused to do so; he waxed proud and joined the defiers.[47] 34

Then We said, "O Adam, you and your wife, both dwell in the Garden and eat to your hearts' content where from you will, but do not go near this tree;[48] otherwise you shall become transgressors"[49] After a time Satan tempted them with that tree to disobey Our Command and brought them out of the state they were in, and We decreed, "Now, go down all of you from here; you are enemies of one another.[50] Henceforth you shall dwell and provide for yourselves on the Earth for a specified period." At that time Adam learnt appropriate words from his Lord and repented,[51] and his Lord accepted his repentance, for He is very Relenting and very Merciful.[52] 35-37

We said, "Now go down, all of you from here.[53] Henceforth there shall come to you Guidance from Me now and again: whoever will follow it shall have neither fear nor sorrow, and whoever will refuse to accept it and defy Our Revelation,[54] they shall be doomed to the Fire wherein they shall remain for ever.[55] 38-39

O children of Israel![56] Just recall to mind My favour wherewith I blessed you:fulfil your covenant with Me and I shall fulfil My 40

covenant with you, and fear Me alone.

Contd. from p. 61]

33. In these sentences the full definition of *fāsiq* has been given: he is one who breaks off or vitiates relations between man and Allah or between man and man, and thus produces chaos on the earth.

34. It is not easy to determine the significance of "seven heavens". In every age man has been formulating different theories about the heaven and the expanse of space surrounding the earth and beyond it according to his observations and speculations, which have been always changing. Hence it will not be correct to link anyone of these with the "seven heavens" referred to in the Qur'ān. It may either mean that God has divided the whole Universe beyond the earth into seven permanent spheres, or that the part of the Universe in which the earth lies consists of seven spheres.

35. Here, the people have been warned of two things: first, that they cannot, and should not, adopt an attitude of disbelief and rebellion against Allah, Who knows everything and from Whom nothing that one does remains hidden. Second, that the God Who knows everything is, in fact, the Source of true knowledge. Any one who turns away from Him, will surely go astray into the darknesses of ignorance. When none beside Him is the source of knowledge, and none beside Him can provide the light by which one may walk one's way of life, what is then the good of turning away from Him?

36. In the foregoing verses, Man has been asked to submit to Allah because He is his Creator and Sustainer and has power over his life and death, and because He is the Master and Ruler of the Universe in which he lives. In these verses, he has been exhorted to submit to Him because he is His vicegerent on the earth. As such, he is not only bound to serve Him but also to obey and act according to the Guidance sent down by Him. For if he did not do so and yielded to the temptations of Satan, his eternal enemy, he would be guilty of the worst crime of rebellion against Allah and meet with evil consequences.

Incidentally, the Qur'ān here throws light on the truth about man and his correct position in the Universe and presents the chapter of human history, which man could not have ascertained in any other way. The important results that this chapter yields, are far more precious than the results which man tries to obtain by excavating miscellaneous bones from the earth and joining them together by speculation and conjecture.

37. *"Malak"* literally means a "messenger", which is translated *farishta* (angel). Angels are not mere abstract powers without personality; they are beings

with personalities and are so to speak the agents of Allah, Who employs them for the administration of His Kingdom. Ignorant people mistook them for associates in Godhead; others thought they were related to God and started to worship them as deities.

38. *Khalifah*: one who exercises the delegated powers on behalf of another as his vicegerent. *Khalifah* thus is not the master, but deputy of the Master; his powers are not his own but delegated to him by the real Master. He has, therefore, no right to have his own will but he is there to fulfil the will of the delegating Authority. It would be dishonesty and treason, if he assumed sovereign powers, or used them according to his own whim, or if he acknowledged another as his sovereign and submitted to his will.

39. This was not an objection but a query raised by the angels, for the angels dare not object to any scheme of Allah. From the word *Khalifah* they had understood that the one, who was about to be created, was going to be entrusted with some powers, but they could not understand how an autonomous creature could fit in this totalitarian system of the universe. They also could not understand how that part of the universe, in which someone was entrusted with autonomy, could be free from disorder.

40. By this, the angels did not mean to say that they should be entrusted with the vicegerency because they deserved it. They simply meant to say, "We are carrying out orders obediently, faithfully and earnestly and are keeping the whole universe clean and in order, and sing hymns of Your praise and sanctify You as Your humble servants. Therefore, we are unable to understand what need then is there for a vicegerent."

The word *tasbih* has a double meaning: it means "to sanctify" as well as "to work earnestly and do one's utmost." Similarly *taqdis* also means both to sanctify and to purify.

41. This was the reply to the second doubt of the angels: "You can not understand the need and wisdom of the appointment of a vicegerent as I do. Your services do not suffice for the purpose that I have in view; I want something more than the services you have mentioned. That is why I am going to create a being on the Earth and endow him with some powers."

42. Nomenclature is the means by which human mind grasps the knowledge of things. Hence, the whole information of man, in fact, consists of assigning names for things. Thus, teaching Adam the names of all things was meant to impart their knowledge to him.

43. It appears that the knowledge of each angel and of each species of angels is confined only to his or its own special sphere. For example, the angels

who deal with the air, know everything about the air but nothing about water. The same is true about the angels who are responsible for other spheres. In contrast to them, man has been granted comprehensive knowledge. He may not know as much about these things as the angels in charge of a special sphere do but the comprehensiveness of knowledge that man has been granted has not been granted to the angels.

44. This demonstration was the answer to the first doubt of the angels. Thus, Allah, so to say, informed them: "I am not giving Adam only authority but also knowledge. The chaos that you apprehended from his appointment is only one aspect of the matter. It has its good aspect also, which is more weighty and valuable than the evil aspect, and a wise man does not give up a greater good because of a lesser evil."

45. This was symbolic of the submission and subjugation to Man of all the angels appointed to manage the Earth and that part of the Universe which is connected with it in any way. As Man was being appointed vicegerent in this part by Allah's command, it was ordained that all the angels, who worked in it must, as far and as long as Allah willed, cooperate with him in their respective spheres whether he wanted to use the powers given to him rightly or wrongly. This implied: "You must help him in whatever he wants to do, irrespective of whether it is right or wrong. If he wants to commit theft or offer the Prayer, or intends to do another good or evil, you must cooperate with him in both cases as long as We allow him to act according to his will and choice." This may be illustrated by the example of a government officer. He is obeyed within his jurisdiction by every official but no sooner is he deposed by the government than those very officials, who carried out his orders promptly cease to obey him. They even handcuff him and take him to prison, if the government so orders. The command given to the angels to bow down before Adam was in the same nature. Possibly the word *sajdah* (bowing down) here is symbolic of only submission, but this also is possible that the angels were ordered to perform some such act actually to signify their subordination, and this seems to be more correct.

46. *Iblis*: dejected and desperate. As a term it is the name of the Jinn who disobeyed Allah and refused to bow down to Adam as a symbol of subordination to him and his offspring and asked Allah to grant him the opportunity of tempting mankind up to the Last Day. He is also called "*ash-Shaitan*" (Satan). He is not merely an abstract power of evil but is a being with his own personality like that of man. He was not an angel as is commonly understood but was one of the jinn who form a distinct species of their own separate from the angels. (Refer to Al-Kahf, XVIII: 50).

47. From the words of the Text it so appears that probably *Iblis* was not alone in refusing to bow down before Adam, but a group of the jinn also was bent upon disobedience. *Iblis* has been particularly mentioned because he was their chief who led the rebellion. But this verse can also be translated as: "He was of the disbelievers." In this case, it would mean that there already existed a group of rebellious and disobedient jinn and *Iblis* belonged to it. The word "*shayatin*" in the Qur'ân has generally been used for these jinn and their species, and wherever there is no basis for taking *shayatin* to imply men, this same jinn satans are implied.

48. This shows that Adam and Eve were first kept in the "Garden" for a trial of their inclinations before they were to be sent to the Earth, the place where they were appointed as vicegerent. A tree was chosen for this purpose and they were forbidden even to go near it. They were duly warned that if they violated the command, they would be considered guilty of iniquity in the sight of Allah. The discussion as to what tree it was and why they were forbidden to go near it, is unnecessary. They were not forbidden because there was something intrinsically evil in the tree itself by which Adam and Eve could be harmed. It was chosen for the purpose of trial to see how far they remained constant on obedience to Allah's command as against the temptations of Satan. For this purpose it was enough to select a tree. That is why Allah has not mentioned the name and any characteristics of the tree.

The Garden was a very suitable place for this trial because it was meant to show to Man that Paradise alone was the fit place for Allah's vicegerent, but if he yielded to satanic temptations, he would deprive himself of it. The only way to regain it was to oppose the enemy successfully who was always on the look-out to mislead him

The tree has not been named or pointedd out specifically in the Quran because there was nothing intrinsically evil in the tree itself. It was merely chosen for the purpose of trial..

49. The Arabic word *zalim* is very comprehensive in its meaning. *Zulm* is "violation of a right or duty" and *zalim* is one who violates a right or duty. Anyone who disobeys Allah really violates three basic rights. First, he violates the rights of Allah Who is worthy of obedience. Second, he violates the rights of all those things and beings whom he employs in this disobedience, *e.g.*, his own limbs and faculties, his fellow beings and those angels who contribute to the fulfilment of his will and all those things which he uses for the performance of the work of iniquity, for they have a right to be used only in accordance with the will of the real Master. But it is an act of iniquity, if he abuses the powers he has over them. Lastly, he violates his own rights on himself, for his own self has a right that he

should do his best to save it from destruction. He is also guilty of iniquity against himself when he brings the wrath of Allah on himself by his disobedience. That is why the Qur'ān, in many places has used the term *zulm* for sin and *zalim* for the sinner.

50. That is, "Satan shall be the adversary of man and man the adversary of Satan". The fact, that Satan tries his utmost to beguile man from the path of Allah to the path of destruction, is a clear proof that he is the arch-enemy of man. On the other side, man's humanity demands that he should fight Satan as his enemy. But it is a pity that man is so beguiled by the temptations of Satan that he begins to take him as his friend. This, however, does not mean that their mutual enmity has really been changed into friendship. It only means that man has been beguiled by his opponent and caught in the snare which has been laid for him.

51. When Adam felt sorry for his guilt and wanted to repent and return to Allah, he could not find appropriate words for asking Allah's pardon. Then Allah took pity upon him on account of his grief and helplessness and taught him the appropriate words.

The Arabic word "*taubah*", means both "to turn back" and "to turn to". When applied to man, it means that he has turned back from rebellion to submission, and, when it is ascribed to Allah, it means that He has again turned with compassion to the penitent person.

52. Here the Qur'ān rejects the theory that the consequences of sin are inevitable and every man shall bear these anyhow. This is one of those self-invented, misleading theories which have done great harm to humanity. As a result of this, one loses for ever all hope of reform, when once one is involved in sin. Even if he feels sorry for a past sin and wants to make amends for it and changes his life for the better, this theory confronts him with despair: there is no hope for you because you are doomed for ever: you must bear the consequences of what you have done in the past. In contrast to this, the Qur'ān says, "It lies absolutely in Allah's power to reward a virtue or to punish a sin. If you are rewarded for a virtue, it is not on account of the natural result of your virtue, but it is through Allah's grace. He has full power to reward it or not. In the same way, if you are punished for a sin, it is not because of the inevitable consequences of the sin but because Allah has full power to punish or pardon it. Of course, being All-Wise, He does not use these powers indiscriminately, but takes into consideration the intention of the doer. If He rewards a virtue, He does so when He sees that His servant performed the good deeds to please Him. And if He rejects an apparent virtue, He does so because He knows that it lacked sincerity. In the same way, He punishes the crime which is committed in a spirit of rebellion and is not followed by self-reproach but by an evil desire to commit more crimes. He, however,

exercises His grace, and forgives the sins for which His servant feels sorry and makes up his mind to change for the better. It is thus clear that the rejection of the theory of the inevitability of punishment for sin holds out new hopes of reform for sinners. Even the worst criminals and the staunchest unbelievers need not despair of forgiveness from Allah, provided that they confess their sins (of course, before their Lord and not before a priest), feel ashamed of their disobedience, give up their attitude of rebellion and adopt the attitude of submission instead.

53. The repetition of this command after forgiveness is very significant. In the preceding verse, it has been said that Adam repented and Allah accepted his repentance. Thus Adam was not only absolved from the sin of disobedience, but his future descendants also were made immune from its effect. There was, therefore, no need for Allah to crucify "His only son" for the atonement of the sin of Adam and of his offspring. On the contrary, Allah not only accepted his repentance but also appointed him as His Messenger to show Guidance to his children.

The repetition of the command, "Go down from here", shows that the real purpose of Adam's creation was to make him vicegerent on the Earth. He was kept in the Garden merely for trial and training, (please see E.N. 48). That is why he was not kept in the Garden after the acceptance of his repentance. He was sent to the Earth not by way of punishment but as a matter of course.

54. *Āyāt* is plural of *āyāt*, which literally means a "sign" or "symbol" that points to something. The Qur'ān has used this word in four different senses. At some places, it means merely a sign or symbol. At other places, the different phenomena of Nature have been termed as *āyāt* of Allah, because each phenomenon points to the Reality which is hidden behind such curtains. Then the miracles which were given to the Messengers have also been called *āyāt* (signs) because these showed that they were the representatives of the Ruler of the universe. At some places the verses of the Book have been called *"āyāt"* because they point not only to the Truth and the Right but also to the Great Author of the Book. It is not only the subject matter of the Book but also its words and mode of expression and its style that point to its Author. The meaning of the word *āyat* in a particular place becomes clear from the context in which it occurs.

55. The law of Allah, contained in vv. 38-39 about the Guidance, has been in force ever since the creation of man and will remain so up to the Last Day. It has been called Allah's "covenant" in verse 27. It is meant to warn man not to invent a way of life for himself but to follow the Guidance of his Lord, for he is His servant as well as vicegerent. And there are only two means of knowing this:

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فَاتَّقُوْنِ ﴿41﴾ وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَاَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿42﴾
وَاَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ وَارْكَعُوْا مَعَ الرّٰكِعِيْنَ ﴿43﴾ اَتَاْمُرُوْنَ النَّاسَ
بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَاَنْتُمْ تَتْلُوْنَ الْكِتٰبَ ؕ اَفَلَا تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿44﴾ وَ
اسْتَعِيْنُوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلٰوةِ ؕ وَاِنَّهَا لَكَبِيْرَةٌ اِلَّا عَلَى الْخٰشِعِيْنَ ﴿45﴾ الَّذِيْنَ ع ۵ ۴ ۵
يَظُنُّوْنَ اَنَّهُمْ مُّلٰقُوْا رَبِّهِمْ وَاَنَّهُمْ اِلَيْهِ رٰجِعُوْنَ ﴿46﴾ يٰبَنِيْٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ اذْكُرُوْا
نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِيْٓ اَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاَنِّيْ فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿47﴾ وَاتَّقُوْا يَوْمًا
لَّا تَجْزِيْ نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَّفْسٍ شَيْـًٔا وَّلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَّلَا يُؤْخَذُ
مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَّلَا هُمْ يُنْصَرُوْنَ ﴿48﴾ وَاِذْ نَجَّيْنٰكُمْ مِّنْ اٰلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُوْمُوْنَكُمْ
سُوْٓءَ الْعَذَابِ يُذَبِّحُوْنَ اَبْنَآءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُوْنَ نِسَآءَكُمْ ؕ وَفِيْ ذٰلِكُمْ بَلَآءٌ
مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿49﴾ وَاِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمُ الْبَحْرَ فَاَنْجَيْنٰكُمْ وَاَغْرَقْنَآ اٰلَ
فِرْعَوْنَ وَاَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُوْنَ ﴿50﴾ وَاِذْ وٰعَدْنَا مُوْسٰٓى اَرْبَعِيْنَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ
اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِهٖ وَاَنْتُمْ ظٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿51﴾ ثُمَّ عَفَوْنَا عَنْكُمْ مِّنْۢ
بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿52﴾ وَاِذْ اٰتَيْنَا مُوْسَى الْكِتٰبَ وَالْفُرْقَانَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿53﴾ وَاِذْ قَالَ مُوْسٰى لِقَوْمِهٖ يٰقَوْمِ اِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ
بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ الْعِجْلَ فَتُوْبُوْٓا اِلٰى بَارِئِكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ ؕ ذٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
عِنْدَ بَارِئِكُمْ ؕ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ ؕ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿54﴾ وَاِذْ قُلْتُمْ يٰمُوْسٰى
لَنْ نُّؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتّٰى نَرَى اللّٰهَ جَهْرَةً فَاَخَذَتْكُمُ الصّٰعِقَةُ وَاَنْتُمْ
تَنْظُرُوْنَ ﴿55﴾ ثُمَّ بَعَثْنٰكُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿56﴾ وَظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ
الْغَمَامَ وَاَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَنَّ وَالسَّلْوٰى ؕ كُلُوْا مِنْ طَيِّبٰتِ مَا رَزَقْنٰكُمْ ؕ وَ

And believe in the Book I have now sent down; as it confirms the Scriptures you already possess, be not the first to reject it; barter not away My Revelations for paltry worldly gain,[57] and guard yourselves against My wrath.Confound not the Truth with falschood nor conceal it knowingly.[58] Establish the *Salāt*, pay the *Zakat*[59] and bow down before Me along with those who bow down. How is it that you enjoin others to follow the Right Way, but forget it yourselves, though you read the Scriptures? Have you no sense at all? Seek help with the *Salāt* and fortitude:[60] no doubt, Salāt is a hard task but not for those obedient servants, who realize that ultimately they shall meet their Lord and shall return to Him.[61] 41-46

O Children of Israel! Just recall to mind My favour that I bestowed upon you, and remember that I exalted you above all the peoples of the world.[62] And guard yourselves against the Day when no one shall avail anyone anything; nor shall intercession be accepted from anyone; nor shall anyone be acquitted for any (amount of) ransom; nor shall the guilty ones be helped from any quarter.[63] 47-48

Recall[64] the time when We delivered you from the slavery of Pharaoh's people.[65] They had inflicted a dreadful torment on you: they killed your sons and let your daughters live. And in this there was a hard trial for you from your Lord.[66] 49

Remember the time when We parted the sea to make way for you and let you pass safely through it and then drowned Pharaoh's people before your very eyes. 50

Call to mind that when We invited Moses for a fixed term of forty nights and days,[67] you took to calf worship in his absence.[68] Though you had committed a wicked transgression, yet We pardoned you even after that so that you might become grateful. 51-53

Remember that (at that very time, when you were committing this gross iniquity) We gave Moses the Book and the criterion of right and wrong[69] so that you might be guided aright. 53

Remember that when Moses (returned with the Divine Gift, he) said to his people, "O my people, you have wronged yourselves grievously by taking the calf for worship. Therefore, turn to your Creator in penitence and slay the guilty ones among you.[70] This is best 54

for you in the sight of your Creator." At that time your Creator accepted your repentance because He is Relenting 'and Merciful.

55-56 Remember when you said, "O Moses, we are not going to believe you until we see with our own eyes Allah (talking to you)". At that very time a thunderbolt struck you while you were looking on and you fell lifeless. Then We raised you to life so that you might become grateful for this favour.[71]

Contd. from p. 69]

either a man should receive direct revelation from Allah, or follow the one who has received Revelation from Him. There is no third way of knowing Allah's Will. Therefore, every other way than these two is not only wrong but also rebellion which will lead ultimately to Hell.

The story of the creation of man and the advent of mankind has been described in six other places in the Qur'ān: Al-A'rāf, VII: 11-25; Al-Hijr, XV: 26-48; Banī Isra'īl, XVII :60-65; Al-Kahf, XVIII 50 : Tā Hā, XX : 116-123, Ṣād, XXXVIII 71 - 85.

It will be useful to read the same story in the Old Testament (Genesis, Chapters 1 to 3). The comparison of the Qur'ânic version with the Biblical one, will conclusively show that the Qur'ān has remained intact in its pure, original and unadulterated form just as it was revealed by Allah, while the Bible has been tampered with.

It will also be interesting to contrast the conversation between Allah and the angels as has been given here in the Qur'ān with that cited in the Talmud. The latter is not only void of spiritual values but is also ridiculous. According to it when the angels asked Allah why He was going to create Man, He answered that He was doing that so that good people should be born on the Earth. He did not mention the birth of bad people lest the angels should withhold their permission for the creation of Man.

56. 'Israel' means the servant of Allah. This was the title that Allah had bestowed upon Jacob, who was a son of Isaac, and a grandson of Abraham (Allah's peace be upon them all). His descendents are called children of Israel. Up to verse 39, it was an introductory discourse meant for all mankind. From verse 40 to verse 121 is a new discourse in which the children of Israel have been especially and particularly addressed. In some places it has also been directed towards the Christians and the *mushriks* of Arabia and in between towards the people who believed in the Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings).

In order to understand the full significance of this address, the following should be kept in view.

First, it aims to appeal to those few followers of the former Prophets, who were still capable of reforming themselves to believe in the Truth which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) had brought and to cooperate with the mission which he had been appointed to perform. They are, therefore, told that the message of the Qur'ān is the same as of the Scriptures of the former Prophets, and the mission of the Holy Prophet also was the same as theirs. It means to say: "At first this mission was entrusted to you so that you may put the Message into practice and then invite the world to accept it. But, not to speak of carrying out the mission, you discarded the Guidance and went on degenerating. The past history of your community and its present moral and religious degeneration are a standing witness against you. Now Allah has sent another Servant of His with the same Message and mission and there is nothing new or strange in this for you. You should not, therefore, oppose the Truth knowingly. The best thing for you is to accept it and cooperate with those who are doing the same work that was once entrusted to you."

Secondly, it aims to argue the Jews out of their wrong position and to expose their moral and religious degeneration thoroughly. Therefore, it proves conclusively that their attitude towards Islām was absolutely wrong; for they were opposing it, whereas they knew that its fundamentals were exactly the same as of their religion and that there was nothing in the teachings of the Qur'ān that was different from or opposed to the teachings of the Torah in principle. It also shows that they had utterly failed to follow the Guidance which was given to them and fulfil the obligations of the leadership entrusted to them. As a proof thereof, such incidents have been cited as they could not deny. Moreover, this address unravelled the plots they were hatching, the doubts they were arousing, the crooked arguments they were advancing and the evil machinations they were contriving to defeat the mission of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), though they knew it to be from Allah. This also exposed their "piety", for it lacked sincerity and righteousness and was motivated by obduracy, prejudice and self-worship. It also proved beyond any shadow of doubt that they did not really want virtue to thrive. This produced the desired effect: it opened the eyes of the righteous element among the Jews and put an end to the spiritual and moral superiority they enjoyed against the common and polytheistic Arabs of Madinah. Besides, when they themselves were once exposed, they were so dismayed that they dared not oppose Islām openly with the courage of conviction.

Thirdly, in the preceding verses, mankind had been invited to accept the Guidance of Allah. Now the example of the Israelites is being cited to show the consequences of discarding that Guidance. The reason why the Israelites have been held out as an example is that they are the only community whose history during the last four thousand years has been a living object lesson for all the nations of the world. In its history one can see all the ups and downs which result from following the Divine Guidance or from discarding it.

Fourthly, though the appeal is addressed to the Jews, it is also meant to forewarn the Muslims against the pitfalls of degeneration into which the followers of the former Prophets had fallen. That is why, on the one hand, the moral weaknesses of the Jews, their wrong notions about religion, their wrong ways of thinking and living, have been pointed out, one by one, while, on the other, the demands of the true faith have been stated so that the Muslims are able to see the Right Way clearly and avoid wrong ways

The Holy Prophet knew by Divine inspiration that, by and by, the Muslims also would follow the same ways that had been pointed out in this discourse. Therefore, according to a Tradition, he forewarned that they would discard the Guidance and follow, step by step, the communities of the former Prophets, that is, the Jews and the Christians, in their wrong ways. It is a pity that they have not paid any heed to this warning and adopted the same ways of degeneration.

57. "Paltry gains": worldly gains for the sake of which these people discarded the commandments and precepts of Allah. As a matter of fact, even the whole wealth of the world put together is worthless, if it is gained in exchange for Allah's Guidance.

58. In order to understand this verse, it should be kept in mind that the Arabs were generally illiterate and uneducated people. As against them, education was common among the Jews, who had among them great scholars renowned even beyond Arabia. That is why the Arabs were overawed by the scholarship of the Jews, more so because their scholars and rabbis made a great show of their learning and piety. and reinforced it with the practice of charms and amulets. The people of Madinah in particular were overawed by the learning of the Jews, for they were surrounded by big Jewish tribes and came in contact with them day and night. As a result, they were immensely influenced by them just as illiterate people usually are influenced by the neighbours who are more educated, more civilized and more religious in character.

Such were the conditions when the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) presented himself as a Prophet and began to invite the people to Islām; naturally

the illiterate Arabs turned to the Jews for guidance in this matter, and said: "You are the followers of a Prophet and possess a Book, so tell us what you think of this man and his teachings, who claims to be a Prophet." This question was repeatedly asked of the Jews by the people of Makkah, and when the Holy Prophet came to Madinah, here also many people visited the Jewish scholars again and again to ask them the same question. But their scholars never gave them the right answer. For they could not say that the doctrine of *Tauhid* that Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) was preaching was wrong, nor that the knowledge which he imparted about the Prophets, scriptures, angels, and the Hereafter was wrong, nor that there was something wrong about the moral principles that he taught. They were neither ready to admit in plain words the righteousness of the teachings of the Holy Prophet; nor had they the courage to refute it openly; nor were they willing to profess the Truth candidly. Instead, they devised a subtle strategy to oppose it: they created one suspicion or the other about the Holy Prophet, his followers and his mission; they would concoct allegations against him and his followers and make false propaganda against them or raise frivolous objections so as to involve them in useless discussions. That is why they have been warned not to conceal the truth by covering it with falsehood, nor suppress it by spreading suspicions and by raising silly objections, nor mix it up with falsehood.

59. The *Salāt* and the *Zakat* have always formed the essential elements of the revealed religion (Islām). Like all other Prophets, the Israelite Prophets also had strictly enjoined these, but by and by the Jews became wholly neglectful of them. They gave up the performance of *Salāt* in congregation and the majority of the people did not even offer it individually. Instead of paying *Zakat*, they started charging interest on money.

60. That is, "If you face some difficulties in following the righteous way, *sabr* and *Salāt* will help remove the difficulties and strengthen you to walk the way easily." Lexically, *sabr* means to check and tie, but in usage it stands for patience, perseverance, endurance and fortitude. The Qur'ān uses this word to express that fortitude, that moral strength, that firmness of purpose and decision, that determination, moral discipline and self-control which enable a person to proceed with patience and courage in the face of afflictions, privations and temptations on the way he chooses in accordance with the dictates of his conscience. What the Qur'ān means to stress is that the Muslims should develop this moral quality in themselves and should observe the *Salāt* regularly to reinforce it from without.

61. "*Salāt* is a hard task" only for the one who is disobedient to Allah and does not believe in the Hereafter. But it is a joyful duty for the one who is willingly and happily obedient to Allah and who believes that one day he will have

[Contd. on p. 78

مَا ظَلَمُوْنَا وَ لٰكِنْ كَانُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُوْنَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَ اِذْ قُلْنَا ادْخُلُوْا هٰذِهِ
الْقَرْيَةَ فَكُلُوْا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا وَّ ادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَّ قُوْلُوْا
حِطَّةٌ نَّغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطٰيٰكُمْ ؕ وَ سَنَزِيْدُ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿٥٨﴾ فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا
قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِيْ قِيْلَ لَهُمْ فَاَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا رِجْزًا مِّنَ
السَّمَآءِ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَفْسُقُوْنَ ﴿٥٩﴾ وَ اِذِ اسْتَسْقٰى مُوْسٰى لِقَوْمِهٖ فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبْ
بِّعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ ؕ فَانْۢبَجَسَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا ؕ قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ اُنَاسٍ
مَّشْرَبَهُمْ ؕ كُلُوْا وَ اشْرَبُوْا مِنْ رِّزْقِ اللّٰهِ وَ لَا تَعْثَوْا فِى الْاَرْضِ مُفْسِدِيْنَ ﴿٦٠﴾
وَ اِذْ قُلْتُمْ يٰمُوْسٰى لَنْ نَّصْبِرَ عَلٰى طَعَامٍ وَّاحِدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا
مِمَّا تُنْۢبِتُ الْاَرْضُ مِنْۢ بَقْلِهَا وَ قِثَّآئِهَا وَ فُوْمِهَا وَ عَدَسِهَا وَ بَصَلِهَا ؕ
قَالَ اَتَسْتَبْدِلُوْنَ الَّذِيْ هُوَ اَدْنٰى بِالَّذِيْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ ؕ اِهْبِطُوْا مِصْرًا فَاِنَّ
لَكُمْ مَّا سَاَلْتُمْ ؕ وَ ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ وَ الْمَسْكَنَةُ ۗ وَ بَآءُوْ بِغَضَبٍ
مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ؕ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا يَكْفُرُوْنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَ يَقْتُلُوْنَ النَّبِيّٖنَ
بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ؕ ذٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَّ كَانُوْا يَعْتَدُوْنَ ﴿٦١﴾ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ
الَّذِيْنَ هَادُوْا وَ النَّصٰرٰى وَ الصّٰبِـِٕيْنَ مَنْ اٰمَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَ الْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ
وَ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ اَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ وَ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَ لَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿٦٢﴾ وَ اِذْ اَخَذْنَا مِيْثَاقَكُمْ وَ رَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّوْرَ ؕ خُذُوْا مَآ
اٰتَيْنٰكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَّ اذْكُرُوْا مَا فِيْهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿٦٣﴾ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ
ذٰلِكَ ۚ فَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَ رَحْمَتُهٗ لَكُنْتُمْ مِّنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ﴿٦٤﴾ وَ لَقَدْ
عَلِمْتُمُ الَّذِيْنَ اعْتَدَوْا مِنْكُمْ فِى السَّبْتِ فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُوْنُوْا قِرَدَةً

(Remember that) We caused the cloud to overshadow you and provided you with[72] *manna* and *salva*[73] for your food, saying, "Eat of the clean and pure things We have bestowed upon you". (In spite of this, your forefathers violated Our commands:) however, they did not harm Us but harmed only themselves. 57

Then call to mind the time when We said, "Go into the town[74] before you and eat to your hearts' content therein, wherefrom you will, but enter the gate bowing down with humility, repeating '*hittatun*';[75] We will forgive your sins and increase the reward of the righteous". But the transgressors perverted the words said to them entirely into a different thing. So We sent down upon the transgressors a severe torment from the sky : that was the punishment for the disobedience they were showing. 58-59

Remember that when Moses prayed for water for his people, We answered, "Strike the rock with your staff": whereupon twelve springs gushed forth from it;[76] the people of every clan came to know their drinking place. (Then they were enjoined:) "Eat and drink of what Allah has provided and do not spread disorder on the earth." 60

Remember: You grumbled: "O Moses, we cannot endure one and the same sort of food. Pray your Lord to bring for us the products of the earth -- green herbs, vegetables, corn, garlic, onions, pulses and the like." Moses replied: "What! would you exchange that which is meaner for that which is nobler?"[77] Well, go and live in a town and you will get there what you demand." By and by, they became so degraded that disgrace and humiliation, misery and wretchedness were stamped upon them and they incurred Allah's wrath. That was because they began to reject the Revelations of Allah[78] and kill His Messengers without any just cause;[79] that was the consequence of their disobedience and their persistent transgression against the Law. 61

Rest assured that whosoever from among the Muslims or the Jews or the Christians or the Sabaeans believes in Allah and the Last Day, and performs good deeds, he will have his reward with his Lord and he will have no cause for fear and grief.[80] 62

Call to mind the time when We raised above you the Ṭūr and made a covenant with you,[81] saying, "Hold fast to the Book which We are giving you and bear in mind the commands and precepts contained 63-64

therein. It is expected that this will lead you on to the paths of virtue and piety." But even after that you forsook the Covenant: nevertheless Allah did not withhold His grace and mercy from you; otherwise you would have been utterly ruined long before this.

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to appear before Allah; nay, it rather becomes hard for him to leave his prescribed Prayer.

62. It refers to the period when the Israelites were the only people in the world who possessed the knowledge of the Truth from Allah and were, therefore, made leaders of the people of the world and were required to invite all other nations to His submission and to guide them on the Right Way.

63. In this verse the Israelites have been warned to guard against their wrong notion about the Hereafter, for this was the main cause of their degeneration. They were under the delusion that they would win salvation just because they were the descendants of great Prophets and had relations with great saints and pious and righteous people. That is why they neglected true religion and involved themselves in sin. Here they are being disillusioned and warned that they will not escape the consequences of their evil deeds by virtue of their relation with some holy person or his intercession in their behalf. That is why immediately after reminding them of the favour (v. 47) they have been warned that they shall be punished like the guilty people who lived in this world without belief in the Hereafter.

64. The events recalled here were well known to all and sundry among the Jews. Therefore, only brief references have been made to these historical events to show that they had remained ungrateful and had persisted in evil deeds in spite of the continuous favours showered upon them by Allah.

65. "Āl-i-Fir'aun" includes both the people of Pharaoh's own family and the people belonging to the ruling class of Egypt.

66. It was a trial of their character. They were made to pass through the fire of the test to see whether they were pure gold or a base metal. Moreover, they were put to the test to see whether they would be grateful to Allah after their miraculous escape.

67. When after their escape from Egypt the Israelites entered the Sinai Peninsula, Allah invited the Prophet Moses to Mount Ṭūr for forty days and forty nights to give him Laws, Instructions and Commands for the guidance of the people who had recently been liberated from slavery. (For details, please see

Exodus, chaps. 24 to 31). It should, however, be noted that the Ṭūr, referred to here, is not the modern port of Ṭūr on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Suez.

68. Cow-worship was very common in Can'an, Egypt and the neighbouring countries. When the Israelites degenerated and became slaves of the Copts after the death of the Prophet Joseph, they learnt this evil practice too from their rulers along with other evils. (The incident of the calf-worship is given in detail in Exodus, 32).

69. "*Furqan*": a criterion for distinguishing truth from falsehood. Here it stands for the knowledge and understanding of religion which enables a person to discern between right and wrong, truth and falsehood.

70. That is, those who made the calf a deity and worshipped it.

71. When Moses went up to Mount Ṭūr for forty days and forty nights, he was also told to bring with him seventy of the chiefs of Israel. Then Allah bestowed upon him the Book and Criterion and gave him the stone tablets with Instructions and Commandments inscribed on them for the guidance of the people, and he presented these to the chiefs. The Qur'ān says that at that time some wicked people from among them began to say: "How can we believe, on a mere statement of yours, that Allah has had a talk with you?" At this Allah became angry with them and punished them. But the Bible says, "And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink". (Exodus, 24: 10-11). Strange though it may appear, the same Bible also tells us that Moses said," "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And He said, "Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me, and live." (For further details please see Exodus, 33:18-23).

72. That is, "We sheltered you with clouds when you entered the Sinai Peninsula and had no place of shelter from the heat of the sun." One should remember that the Israelites had emigrated in large numbers from Egypt and had no place in the Sinai Peninsula to hide their heads, not to speak of houses and tents. Had Allah not kept the sky cloudy for a long time, they would have perished by the scorching heat of the desert sun.

73. *Manna* and *salva* were the natural relief provisions supplied by Allah to feed the Israelites in the wilderness. *Manna* fell on the ground like dew-drops and *salvā* flew in thousands like quails. There was such a plenty of these provisions that a whole nation lived on them for forty years and was never confronted with starvation or famine. In modern times even a well developed and resourceful country finds it extremely difficult to make adequate food

arrangements for a few hundred thousand emigrants if they happen to enter it suddenly and unexpectedly. (For details refer to Exodus, 16; Numbers, 11:7-9, 31-32; Joshua, 5:12).

74. The identity of the town has not so far been determined. As this incident took place when the Israelites were still wandering in the Sinai Peninsula, most probably it was situated somewhere there. But it is also possible that it might have been Shittim which was situated on the eastern bank of the Jordan, opposite to Jericho. According to the Bible, the Israelites conquered this city during the last years of Moses and committed debaucheries. Consequently, Allah inflicted a terrible punishment on them in the form of an epidemic which killed twenty-four thousand of them. (Numbers, 25: 1-9).

75. They were told not to enter the town like cruel and ruthless tyrants but to go in meekly and with humility like God-fearing people, just as the Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) did at the conquest of Makkah.

"*Hittatun*" can have two meanings: "You should enter the town, (1) begging Allah's forgiveness for sins, and (2) granting general amnesty and refraining from plundering and murdering the inhabitants."

76. That rock can still be seen in the Sinai Peninsula with the twelve holes of the springs. Twelve springs were caused to flow for the Israelites in order to avoid water disputes among their twelve clans.

77. It does not mean: "You are asking, instead of *manna* and *salva* which you get gratis, things for which you will have to till and cultivate the land." But it means: "You are neglecting that grand purpose -- the purification of your hearts and the preparation for the leadership of the world -- for which you are being made to travel in the desert: instead of this, you are after the gratification of your taste and palate and cannot forego those things even for some time." (For comparison, see Numbers, 11: 4-9).

78. They rejected the Revelations in different ways: (*a*) They refused to accept anything as revealed, if it went against their own ideas or desires; (*b*) they brazen-facedly violated the clear injunctions of Allah, knowing full well that they were discarding His Commandments; and (*c*) they distorted and twisted the meaning of Revelations in order to suit their desires and lusts.

79. The history of the Israelites abounds in instances of the persecution of their own Prophets. We cite here a few from the Bible:

(1) After the death of the Prophet Solomon, the kingdom of the Israelites was split into two states -- the kingdom of Judah with its capital at Jerusalem, and the kingdom of Israel with its capital at Samaria. As the two were often at

war with each other, the things came to such a pass that the kingdom of Judah asked for help from the Aramaic kingdom of Damascus against their own brethren. At this the Prophet Hanani by God's command severely rebuked Asa king of Judah for relying on the king of Syria instead of relying on "the Eternal your God." But Asa instead of heeding the warning sent the Prophet of God to the prison house. (2 Chronicles, 16: 1-10).

(2) When the Prophet Elijah rebuked the Israelites for serving and worshipping Baal, and asked them to serve and worship One God alone, they became his mortal enemies. King Ahab of Samaria threatened to kill him because his idolatrous wife incited him against the Prophet Elijah. In terror he ran for his life to the mountains in the Sinai Peninsula. During the period of affliction, he said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away". (1 Kings, 19: 1-10).

(3) King Ahab sent another Prophet, Micaiah, to prison for speaking out the truth. "And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son; and say, "Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in peace." (1 Kings, 22: 26-27).

(4) When the people of Judah began to worship idols openly and to do what was evil in the sight of Allah, the Prophet Zecharia raised his voice against these evils, saying: "Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you. And they conspired against him, and stoned him at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the Lord." (2 Chronicles, 24: 20-21)

(5) When the Israelite state of Samaria was destroyed by the Assyrians, and the Jewish state at Jerusalem was threatened with imminent danger, the Prophet Jeremiah began to bewail and warn his people of their degeneration and its evil consequences. He lamented and cried, "Mend your ways otherwise you will meet with a far worse doom than Samaria." In answer to this the Jews cursed him, beat him and imprisoned him. They accused him of treachery against the nation and shouted, "You are deserting to the Chaldeans." He was arrested and flogged and confined in the dungeon cells. Then they put him into an underground cistern, lowering him down with ropes so that he should sink in the mud and die on the spot from starvation. (For details please refer to Jeremiah, 15: 10, 18: 20-23; 20:1-18 and Chapters 36 to 40.)

(6) About the Prophet Amos, it is written that when he rebuked the Israelite state of Samaria for its evil and immoral doings and warned them of their evil

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خٰسِـِٔيْنَ ﴿٦٥﴾ فَجَعَلْنٰهَا نَكَالًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا وَمَا خَلْفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً
لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٦٦﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوْسٰى لِقَوْمِهٖٓ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوْا بَقَرَةً
قَالُوْٓا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُوًا ۖ قَالَ أَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ أَنْ أَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْجٰهِلِيْنَ ﴿٦٧﴾ قَالُوا
ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَّنَا مَا هِيَ ۖ قَالَ إِنَّهٗ يَقُوْلُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَّا فَارِضٌ
وَّلَا بِكْرٌ ۖ عَوَانٌ بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ ۖ فَافْعَلُوْا مَا تُؤْمَرُوْنَ ﴿٦٨﴾ قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ
يُبَيِّنْ لَّنَا مَا لَوْنُهَا ۖ قَالَ إِنَّهٗ يَقُوْلُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ صَفْرَآءُ ۙ فَاقِعٌ لَّوْنُهَا
تَسُرُّ النّٰظِرِيْنَ ﴿٦٩﴾ قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَّنَا مَا هِيَ ۙ إِنَّ الْبَقَرَ تَشٰبَهَ
عَلَيْنَا ۖ وَإِنَّآ إِنْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ لَمُهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿٧٠﴾ قَالَ إِنَّهٗ يَقُوْلُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ
لَّا ذَلُوْلٌ تُثِيْرُ الْأَرْضَ وَلَا تَسْقِي الْحَرْثَ ۚ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لَّا شِيَةَ فِيْهَا ۚ قَالُوا
الْـٰٔنَ جِئْتَ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ فَذَبَحُوْهَا وَمَا كَادُوْا يَفْعَلُوْنَ ﴿٧١﴾ وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ
نَفْسًا فَادّٰرَءْتُمْ فِيْهَا ۖ وَاللّٰهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَّا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُوْنَ ﴿٧٢﴾ فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبُوْهُ
بِبَعْضِهَا ۚ كَذٰلِكَ يُحْيِ اللّٰهُ الْمَوْتٰى ۙ وَيُرِيْكُمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿٧٣﴾ ثُمَّ
قَسَتْ قُلُوْبُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً ۚ وَإِنَّ
مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهٰرُ ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشَّقَّقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ
الْمَآءُ ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا
تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٧٤﴾ أَفَتَطْمَعُوْنَ أَنْ يُّؤْمِنُوْا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيْقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُوْنَ
كَلٰمَ اللّٰهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُوْنَهٗ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوْهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾ وَإِذَا
لَقُوا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا قَالُوْٓا اٰمَنَّا ۚ وَإِذَا خَلَا بَعْضُهُمْ إِلٰى بَعْضٍ قَالُوْٓا
أَتُحَدِّثُوْنَهُمْ بِمَا فَتَحَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَآجُّوْكُمْ بِهٖ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ ۚ أَفَلَا

And you know well the story of those among you who broke Sabbath.[82] We said to them, "Be apes -- despised and hated by all. Thus We made their end a warning to the people of their time and succeeding generations, and an admonition for God-fearing people. 65-66

Then call to mind the other event: when Moses said to his people, "Allah commands you to sacrifice a cow," they replied, "Do you mean to have a jest with us?" He answered, "I crave Allah's protection from behaving like ignorant people." Then they said, "Please make a request to your Lord to give us some details of the cow." Moses answered, "Allah says that the cow should neither be old nor immature but of middle age. Do, therefore, as you are bidden." But they further asked, "Please request your Lord to make it clear to us of what colour she should be." Moses answered, "He says that she should be of yellow colour, so deep and bright as to delight the beholders." Again they said, "Pray your Lord to specify for us the kind of cow that is required; for cows (of this type) look alike to us. We shall then find her, if God so wills." Moses answered, "Allah says that she should be a cow which has not been yoked nor has ploughed the land nor watered the fields; which is sound and whole, without blemish." Then they cried out, "Now you have given an accurate description." Then they sacrificed her but they did not appear to be doing this willingly.[84] 67-71

You should also recall to mind another incident: You slew a man and began to dispute about the murder and accuse one another of it, but Allah had decreed that what you were trying to hide should be disclosed. So We commanded, "Strike the corpse of the murdered man with a part of the sacrificed cow. See how Allah brings the dead to life and shows you His Signs, so that you may understand."[85] -- But even after seeing these Signs your hearts hardened and became as hard as rocks; nay, even harder than rocks. For there are some rocks out of which springs gush forth, and others which split open, and water issues out of them; then there are some which tumble down for fear of Allah. And Allah is not unaware of what you are doing. 72-74

O Muslims, do you then expect that these people will accept your invitation and become believers?[86] whereas there have always been among them some who have been hearing the Word of God, understanding it well and then perverting and tampering with it 75-82

تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾ اَوَ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّوْنَ وَ مَا يُعْلِنُوْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾
وَ مِنْهُمْ اُمِّيُّوْنَ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ الْكِتٰبَ اِلَّاۤ اَمَانِيَّ وَ اِنْ هُمْ اِلَّا يَظُنُّوْنَ ﴿٧٨﴾
فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِيْنَ يَكْتُبُوْنَ الْكِتٰبَ بِاَيْدِيْهِمْ ۗ ثُمَّ يَقُوْلُوْنَ هٰذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ
اللّٰهِ لِيَشْتَرُوْا بِهٖ ثَمَنًا قَلِيْلًا ؕ فَوَيْلٌ لَّهُمْ مِّمَّا كَتَبَتْ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَ وَيْلٌ
لَّهُمْ مِّمَّا يَكْسِبُوْنَ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَ قَالُوْا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ اِلَّاۤ اَيَّامًا مَّعْدُوْدَةً ؕ قُلْ
اَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ يُّخْلِفَ اللّٰهُ عَهْدَهٗۤ اَمْ تَقُوْلُوْنَ عَلَى
اللّٰهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٨٠﴾ بَلٰى مَنْ كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَّ اَحَاطَتْ بِهٖ خَطِيْٓـَٔتُهٗ
فَاُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ عَمِلُوا
الصّٰلِحٰتِ اُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ الْجَنَّةِ ۚ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿٨٢﴾ وَ اِذْ اَخَذْنَا مِيْثَاقَ
بَنِيْۤ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ لَا تَعْبُدُوْنَ اِلَّا اللّٰهَ ۫ وَ بِالْوَالِدَيْنِ اِحْسَانًا وَّ ذِي الْقُرْبٰى
وَ الْيَتٰمٰى وَ الْمَسٰكِيْنِ وَ قُوْلُوْا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَّ اَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَ اٰتُوا
الزَّكٰوةَ ؕ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا مِّنْكُمْ وَ اَنْتُمْ مُّعْرِضُوْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَ اِذْ اَخَذْنَا
مِيْثَاقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُوْنَ دِمَآءَكُمْ وَ لَا تُخْرِجُوْنَ اَنْفُسَكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ ثُمَّ
اَقْرَرْتُمْ وَ اَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُوْنَ ﴿٨٤﴾ ثُمَّ اَنْتُمْ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ تَقْتُلُوْنَ اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَ تُخْرِجُوْنَ
فَرِيْقًا مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِهِمْ تَظٰهَرُوْنَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِالْاِثْمِ وَ الْعُدْوَانِ ؕ وَ اِنْ
يَّاْتُوْكُمْ اُسٰرٰى تُفٰدُوْهُمْ وَ هُوَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ اِخْرَاجُهُمْ ؕ اَفَتُؤْمِنُوْنَ
بِبَعْضِ الْكِتٰبِ وَ تَكْفُرُوْنَ بِبَعْضٍ ۚ فَمَا جَزَآءُ مَنْ يَّفْعَلُ ذٰلِكَ مِنْكُمْ
اِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ يُرَدُّوْنَ اِلٰٓى اَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ ؕ
وَ مَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٨٥﴾ اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ اشْتَرَوُا الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا

knowingly.[87] When they meet those who believe in Muhammad, they say, "We also believe in him." But when they meet one another in private, they say, "Have you got no sense that you disclose to them those things which Allah has revealed to you so that they might bring them as a proof against you before your Lord?[88] Do they really not know that Allah is fully aware of what they hide and what they disclose? -- Then there are among them some un-lettered people who have no knowledge of the Book but depend upon empty hopes and are guided by mere conjecture and guess-work.[89] So woe to their learned people, who write the law with their own hands and then say to the people, "This is from Allah," so that they might gain some paltry worldly end.[90] (They do not see that) this writing of their hands will bring woe to them and what they gain thereby will lead to their ruin. They also say, "The fire of Hell is not going to touch us, and even if it does at all, it will be only for a few days."[91] Say, "Have you obtained a promise from Allah which He would not break? Or, do you attribute to Allah things you do not know? Why will not the fire of Hell touch you? Whoever earns evil and becomes engrossed in sin shall be doomed to Hell and abide therein for ever. Only those people who believe and do good deeds, will be the dwellers of the Garden and live there for ever.

Remember that We made a solemn covenant with the children of Israel to this effect: **worship none save Allah; be good to your parents, to your relatives, to the orphans and to the helpless; speak aright with the people: establish the *Salât* and pay the *Zakat*. But with the exception of a few, you all slid back from it and are paying no heed to it even now.** 83

Remember also that We made another solemn covenant with you: **you shall not shed blood among yourselves nor expel one another from your homes. And you confirmed it and you are a witness to it. But inspite of this, you are killing your brethren and driving them out from their homes and making unjust and aggressive alliances against one another. And when they come to you as captives, you trade on their ransoms whereas their expulsion itself was unlawful for you. Do you then believe in one part of the Scriptures and disbelieve in the other?**[92] What other punishment do such people from among you deserve except an ignominious life in this world and the most grievous doom on the Day of Resurrection? Allah is not unaware of what you 84-86

are doing. These are the people who have preferred the worldly life to the life in the Hereafter. Therefore their torment shall not be lightened nor shall help be given to them (from any quarter).

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consequences, he was served with the notice: "O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah ... and prophesy there." (Amos, 7: 10-13).

(7) When John the Baptist raised his voice against the immoralities which were being openly practised in the court of Herod, king of Judah, he was arrested and bound in prison. Then at the request of Herodias, his wife, who had a grudge against him, he sent one of the guards to bring his head. The man went and beheaded him in the prison and brought his head on a dish to be presented to her. Thus, the Prophet of God was killed without any cause. (ark, 6: 17-29.)

(8) The last victim of the evil designs of the high priests and the elders of the jews was Jesus Christ, who took them to task for their sins and hypocrisies and advised them to lead a righteous life. For this "crime" of his, they plotted against him: bought Judas, one of his twelve disciples, and sent a large mob with swords and cudgels to seize him and take him away to the house of the high priest. After binding him, they led him off, and handed him over to Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor. They tried to procure false evidence against him in order to have him put to death. They had become so hard-hearted that they asked Pilate to release Barabbas, a murderer, as a boon at the festival but to "crucify him".

In this verse, the Qur'ān briefly refers to this most shameful chapter of the history of the Israelites and declares that they fully deserved the curses and condemnation of Allah. They chose their worst offenders against law and morality and made them their chiefs and leaders, and sent their most pious and righteous men to the gaol or the gallows.

80. The context in which this verse occurs shows that the Qur'ān is not laying down here the details of the creed and righteous deeds, which one should believe and practise in order to earn salvation. These things have been described in their proper places. Here, the object is to refute the self-delusion of the Jews that salvation was their sole monopoly. They were suffering from the delusion that they had some special relationship with God; therefore whoever belonged to their race, would go straight to Heaven, irrespective of his creed and deeds, and all other people were born to become fuel of Hell. To remove this misunderstanding of theirs Allah declares that salvation does not depend upon one's connection with any group but on one's right beliefs and good deeds. Whoever goes before Allah

with these provisions will find his reward with Him, for Allah's judgement will be based on one's real worth and not on the census registers.

81. The way this incident has been described at different places in the Qur'ān, shows that it was at that time a well known incident among the Israelites, but now it is difficult to understand and know what actually happened. One may, however, understand that at the time of making the covenant at the foot of the mountain a dreadful situation was created and it so appeared that the mountain was going to fall upon them. A similar scene has been depicted in Sūrah Al-A'raf, VII: 171. (Please see E.N. 132 of VII, Al-A'raf)

Although its description in the Bible is a little different from that of the Talmud, it depicts the scene very vividly: "And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." (Exodus, 19: 18.) "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking : and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear : but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (Exodus, 20 :18-19).

82. *Sabbath*: Saturday. The Israelites were enjoined to keep the Sabbath as "a sign between me and you throughout your generations" for a perpetual covenant. "Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death." (Exodus, 31: 12-17) But when the Israelites became corrupt morally and religiously, they began to desecrate it openly and began to do business without hesitation on the Sabbath.

83. This incident has been described in detail in Al-A'raf, VII: 163-166. There is a difference of opinion as to what actually happened. Some are of the opinion that they were physically transformed into apes, while others hold the view that from that time onward they began to behave like apes. The words of the Qur'ān, however, indicate that it was not a moral but a physical metamorphosis. In my opinion their bodies were transformed into those of apes, but their human minds were left intact in order to subject them to extreme torture.

84. The Israelites were commanded to sacrifice a cow in order to rid them of the sanctity and worship of cow which they had adopted from the pagan nations around them. It was a test of their faith: if they really believed in Allah as their only Deity and did not make anyone or anything else the object of their worship, they should break the idol of their former worship with their own hands. But this proved to be a very hard test. They tried to evade and avoid the sacrifice because

their belief in One God had not become firm as yet. They went on asking one detail after the other in order to put it off, but the more questions they asked the more they were driven into a tight corner. So much so that at last they were specifically told to sacrifice that very golden-coloured cow, which was being specially chosen for worship at that time. The Bible also mentions this incident, but does not tell how the Israelites tried to put it off by asking a number of unnecessary questions. (Please refer to Numbers, 19: 1-10).

85. The wording of the Qur'ān clearly shows that the murdered man came to life for a little while and told the name of his murderer. However, there is some ambiguity concerning the method applied for discovering the murderer, that is, the striking of the dead body of the murdered man with a piece of "the sacrificed cow". A method similar to this described in Deut. 21: 1-9, confirms the interpretation put forward by the ancient scholars, that is, the dead body was struck with a piece of the flesh of the sacrificed cow and it came to life. In this way, a Sign of Allah was shown and at the same time it was demonstrated that the object of their worship was so powerless that its slaughter did not cause any harm. On the contrary, its slaughter proved useful.

86. Here the addressees are the new converts of Madinah, who had embraced Islām only recently. They had become interested in the Holy Prophet because they had often heard from the neighbouring Jews about Prophethood, Revelation, Angels, Divine Law, etc. They had also heard from them that they were expecting a new Prophet whose followers would prevail over the whole world. That is why the people of Madinah turned to the Holy Prophet when they heard of him and entered into the fold of Islām in large numbers. Naturally, they expected that the Jews, who possessed revealed Scriptures and who themselves had foretold the coming of a Prophet, would be the first to welcome Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) as a Prophet and would be in the forefront of his supporters. When, contrary to their expectations, the Jews did not come forward, the new Muslims themselves went to them and invited them to accept Islām, but they failed to persuade them. The hypocrites and the opponents of Islām used this rejection as an argument against Islām itself. They argued like this: there must be something suspicious about it: had Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) really been a Prophet, these pious and learned followes of the earlier scriptures, would not have rejected him knowingly, and ruined their Hereafter. In order to counteract the mischief caused by this fallacy, the past history of the Jews has been related to show that nothing better could be expected of them. This also cautioned the simple Muslims against cherishing any hope that the Jews of their city would in a body welcome Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) as the Prophet about whom prophecies has been made in their own Books. They have been warned that they should not entertain such expectations from the people whose history has been

so and so. This was necessary because they were liable to become disheartened because of the rejection of Islām by them. As to the Jews, they had become so degenerate and hard-hearted that they were not moved even by those verses which melted the hearts of the pagans who formerly used to kill their own daughters. Not only this, these hard-hearted Jews made fun of those very verses also. Therefore, the zealous Muslims were warned that they should understand the real condition of the Jews, who had corrupted the Truth to suit their own desires and then had the audacity to have their hopes centred on the religion which they had themselves perverted. it was wrong to entertain any vain hopes that such people would accept the Truth as soon as it was presented before them.

87. "Some among them": their rabbis and jurists. "Word of God": the Torah, Psalms and other Books which they had received through their Prophets. The Jewish scholars not only twisted, distorted and misinterpreted the revealed scriptures, and read into them the meaning they wanted to read, but they also tampered with the actual words of the text.

88. When they met secretly, they warned each other not to disclose to the Muslims those passages of the Torah and other Scriptures which contained prophecies about the Holy Prophet. They also warned each other not to inform the Muslims about those verses and teachings of their holy books which, they feared, would expose to objection their own present condition and attitude for they were afraid that the Muslims would present these as arguments against them on the Day of Judgement. This is an instance of the kind of belief they held about Allah's knowledge. They were under the delusion that if they succeeded in hiding the Truth and their corruption of the Scriptures in this world, there would be no possibility of bringing a case against them in the Next World. That is why in the parenthetical clause that follows they have been asked whether they really believed Allah to be unaware of the affairs of the people.

89. This refers to the common people of the Jews, who were totally ignorant of the teachings of their own Scriptures. They had neither any knowledge of the fundamentals of religion, nor of the regulations concerning morality and rules of everyday life, nor of the principles leading to ultimate success or failure. And the pity is that they had formed their own notions about religion without this knowledge and were living on false hopes.

90. This refers to what their learned people did. They not only perverted their Scriptures to suit their desires and vanities, but also blended with the Text of the Bible their own interpretations, their national history, their superstitions, their self-made theories, philosophies and laws. Then they presented all this mixture before the people as if it were actually from God. Every historical fiction, every

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بِالْاٰخِرَةِ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنْصَرُوْنَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَلَقَدْ اٰتَيْنَا
مُوْسَى الْكِتٰبَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْۢ بَعْدِهٖ بِالرُّسُلِ ۖ وَاٰتَيْنَا عِيْسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
الْبَيِّنٰتِ وَاَيَّدْنٰهُ بِرُوْحِ الْقُدُسِ ۭ اَفَكُلَّمَا جَاۗءَكُمْ رَسُوْلٌۢ بِمَا لَا تَهْوٰٓى
اَنْفُسُكُمُ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ ۚ فَفَرِيْقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ ۤ وَفَرِيْقًا تَقْتُلُوْنَ ﴿٨٧﴾ وَقَالُوْا قُلُوْبُنَا
غُلْفٌ ۭ بَلْ لَّعَنَهُمُ اللّٰهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيْلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٨٨﴾ وَلَمَّا جَاۗءَهُمْ كِتٰبٌ
مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ ۙ وَكَانُوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُوْنَ عَلَى
الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا ۚ فَلَمَّا جَاۗءَهُمْ مَّا عَرَفُوْا كَفَرُوْا بِهٖ ۚ فَلَعْنَةُ اللّٰهِ عَلَى
الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٨٩﴾ بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهٖٓ اَنْفُسَهُمْ اَنْ يَّكْفُرُوْا بِمَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ بَغْيًا
اَنْ يُّنَزِّلَ اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ عَلٰي مَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهٖ ۚ فَبَاۗءُوْ بِغَضَبٍ
عَلٰي غَضَبٍ ۭ وَلِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ عَذَابٌ مُّهِيْنٌ ﴿٩٠﴾ وَاِذَا قِيْلَ لَهُمْ اٰمِنُوْا بِمَآ
اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ قَالُوْا نُؤْمِنُ بِمَآ اُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَيَكْفُرُوْنَ بِمَا وَرَاۗءَهٗ ۚ وَهُوَ
الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ ۭ قُلْ فَلِمَ تَقْتُلُوْنَ اَنْۢبِيَاۗءَ اللّٰهِ مِنْ قَبْلُ اِنْ
كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَلَقَدْ جَاۗءَكُمْ مُّوْسٰى بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ
مِنْۢ بَعْدِهٖ وَاَنْتُمْ ظٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿٩٢﴾ وَاِذْ اَخَذْنَا مِيْثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ
الطُّوْرَ ۭ خُذُوْا مَآ اٰتَيْنٰكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَّاسْمَعُوْا ۭ قَالُوْا سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا ۚ وَاُشْرِبُوْا
فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ ۭ قُلْ بِئْسَمَا يَاْمُرُكُمْ بِهٖٓ اِيْمَانُكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ
مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٩٣﴾ قُلْ اِنْ كَانَتْ لَكُمُ الدَّارُ الْاٰخِرَةُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ خَالِصَةً مِّنْ
دُوْنِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوُا الْمَوْتَ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٩٤﴾ وَلَنْ يَّتَمَنَّوْهُ اَبَدًۢا
بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ اَيْدِيْهِمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِالظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٩٥﴾ وَلَتَجِدَنَّهُمْ اَحْرَصَ النَّاسِ

And We gave Moses the Book and sent after him a train of Messengers in succession. Then We sent Jesus, son of Mary, with clear Signs and supported him with the Holy Spirit.[93] Then how is it that whenever a Messenger came to you with that which did not suit your lusts, you grew rebellious against him, and repudiated some and slew others. -- They say, "Our hearts are secure."[94] Nay, the fact is that Allah has cursed them for their disbelief; so they are little disposed to believe. -- And how are they behaving now towards a Book which has come to them from Allah? Inspite of the fact that it confirms the Scriptures which they already possessed, and, inspite of the fact that, before it came, they used to pray for a signal victory over the disbelievers, they rejected it when it came, although they recognized it.[95] May Allah's curse be upon such disbelievers! What a mean thing it is with which they delude their minds.[96] They reject the Guidance which Allah has sent down merely because of their grudge why Allah has in His bounty sent it to whom He chose from amongst His servants.[97] They have thus incurred wrath after wrath, and for such disbelievers there is a disgraceful doom. 87-90

When it is said to them, "Believe in that which Allah has sent down," they say, "We believe only in that which has been sent to us", and reject everything else, though it is the Truth and confirms what is with them. Well, ask them, "If you sincerely believed in what was sent down to you, why did you kill the Messengers of Allah (who were sent to you from amongst yourselves)? (More than that:) Moses came to you with clear Signs, yet no sooner was he away from you than you transgressed and took the calf for worship. Recall also to mind the Covenant We made with you while We raised the Ṭūr over you: 'Follow strictly the precepts We are giving you and give ear to Our Commandments.' Your forefathers replied, "We have heard but we will not obey." They were so prone to unbelief that they cherished the calf in their hearts. Tell them (O Muhammad), "If indeed you are believers, yours is a strange Faith that enjoins you to do such evil things." 91-93

Say to them, "If the abode of the Hereafter with Allah is exclusively reserved for you and not for the rest of mankind, then you should long for death, if you are sincere in your claim."[98] Believe it that they will never wish for it, for (they are fully aware of the consequences 94-96

معلقة ١١ ع ١٠ ١١

عَلٰى حَيٰوةٍ ۚ وَمِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اَشْرَكُوْا ۚ يَوَدُّ اَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعَمَّرُ اَلْفَ سَنَةٍ ۚ وَ
مَا هُوَ بِمُزَحْزِحِهٖ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ اَنْ يُّعَمَّرَ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ بَصِيْرٌۢ بِمَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٩٦﴾
قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّجِبْرِيْلَ فَاِنَّهٗ نَزَّلَهٗ عَلٰى قَلْبِكَ بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ مُصَدِّقًا
لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَّبُشْرٰى لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٩٧﴾ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّلّٰهِ وَ
مَلٰٓئِكَتِهٖ وَرُسُلِهٖ وَجِبْرِيْلَ وَمِيْكٰلَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَدُوٌّ لِّلْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٩٨﴾ وَلَقَدْ
اَنْزَلْنَآ اِلَيْكَ اٰيٰتٍۢ بَيِّنٰتٍ ۚ وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهَآ اِلَّا الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿٩٩﴾ اَوَكُلَّمَا عٰهَدُوْا
عَهْدًا نَّبَذَهٗ فَرِيْقٌ مِّنْهُمْ ۭ بَلْ اَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ وَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ
رَسُوْلٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ نَبَذَ فَرِيْقٌ مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا
الْكِتٰبَ ۙ كِتٰبَ اللّٰهِ وَرَاۗءَ ظُهُوْرِهِمْ كَاَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿١٠١﴾ وَاتَّبَعُوْا مَا تَتْلُوا
الشَّيٰطِيْنُ عَلٰي مُلْكِ سُلَيْمٰنَ ۚ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمٰنُ وَلٰكِنَّ الشَّيٰطِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا
يُعَلِّمُوْنَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ ۚ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ عَلَي الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوْتَ وَمَارُوْتَ ۭ
وَمَا يُعَلِّمٰنِ مِنْ اَحَدٍ حَتّٰى يَقُوْلَآ اِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ ۭ فَيَتَعَلَّمُوْنَ
مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُوْنَ بِهٖ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهٖ ۭ وَمَا هُمْ بِضَاۗرِّيْنَ بِهٖ مِنْ
اَحَدٍ اِلَّا بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَيَتَعَلَّمُوْنَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ ۭ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوْا
لَمَنِ اشْتَرٰىهُ مَا لَهٗ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ ۭ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهٖٓ اَنْفُسَهُمْ ۭ
لَوْ كَانُوْا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ وَلَوْ اَنَّهُمْ اٰمَنُوْا وَاتَّقَوْا لَمَثُوْبَةٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ خَيْرٌ ۭ
لَوْ كَانُوْا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ ۭ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَقُوْلُوْا رَاعِنَا وَقُوْلُوا انْظُرْنَا ١٢ ع ١٢
وَاسْمَعُوْا ۭ وَلِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ﴿١٠٤﴾ مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْ اَهْلِ
الْكِتٰبِ وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ اَنْ يُّنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنْ خَيْرٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ

of) what they have sent before them for the Hereafter. And Allah knows well the mentality of the transgressors. You will find that, of all mankind, they are the greediest for life,[99] nay, they are even greedier than the *mushriks*. Each one of them longs to have a life of a thousand years, but a long life can, by no means, remove them away from the scourge, for Allah is watching whatever they are doing.

Say to them, "Whoever is enemy to Gabriel,[100] should understand that he has, by Allah's command, revealed to your heart the Qur'ān[101] which confirms what was revealed before it,[102] and brings Guidance and glad tidings[103] to the Believers. (If their enmity to Gabriel is due to this, let them understand that) whoever is enemy to Allah, His Angels, His Messengers, Gabriel and Michael, Allah is enemy to such disbelievers." 97-98

We have sent down to you Revelations that clearly expound the Truth, and none but the disobedient reject them. Has it not always been so that every time they made a covenant, some of them set it aside? Nay, most of them never believe in it sincerely. And whenever a Messenger came to them from Allah, confirming that Scripture which they already possessed, some from among the people of the Book threw the Book of Allah behind their backs as though they knew nothing about it. (Instead of this,) they began to follow that (magic) to which the devils falsely attributed (the greatness of) the kingdom of Solomon.[104] In fact Solomon was never involved in any practice of disbelief, but the satans, who taught magic to the people were themselves guilty of disbelief. They were after that thing which was sent to Hārūt and Mārūt, the two angels at Babylon. Whenever these two angels taught black art to anyone, they would always give a clear warning beforehand, saying, "We are merely a trial for you; so you should not commit blasphemy."[105] But in spite of this warning, those people used to learn from the angels the art which caused division between husband and wife.[106] Although it was obvious that they could not do any harm to anyone by means of this magic without Allah's permission, yet they learnt that art which could not be profitable even for them but was actually harmful. Moreover, they knew it full well that anyone, who purchased that art, would have no share in the Hereafter. What a vile commodity it was for which they sold off their souls, if they had but known it! Had they believed in Allah and 99103

practised piety, they would have received a far better reward from Allah, if they had but known it.

104-105 O Believers,[107] do not say, "*Ra'ina*" but say, "*Unzurna*" and listen[108] to what is said; for the disbelievers deserve a painful punishment. The people who have rejected the message of Truth, be

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Contd. from p. 89]

interpretation, every man-made creed, and every bye law that had somehow entered into the Holy Book, became the "Word of God," and it was absolutely obligatory for every Jew to believe in all these things and, if one did not, he was declared to be a renegade or a heretic.

91. There was a general belief among the common Jews and their religious leaders that they would not be sent to Hell in spite of their wrong beliefs and evil deeds just because they were Jews. They thought that even if any punishment was imposed on them, it would be for a few days only after which they would be sent to Paradise.

92. As a concrete example of this may be cited the strange conduct of the different clans of the Jews, who lived in the neighbourhood of Madinah. Before the migration of the Holy Prophet, they had entered into alliances with the neighbouring Arab clans, Aus and Khazraj. When one Arab clan went to war with the other clan, their respective Jewish allies also went to war against each other. Thus Jews waged war upon Jews, whereas this was clearly against the teachings of their Scriptures which they knowingly violated. But when the Jews of one clan fell into the hands of the other clan as prisoners of war, they would redeem them after taking ransom for them. When they were questioned about this inhuman trade of their own brethren, they tried to justify it, saying that it was allowed by the Scriptures. It is strange that they forgot the same Scriptures which they brazen-facedly violated by going to war against each other. Thus on the one hand, they accepted that part of the Scriptures which allowed ransom for prisoners and , on the other hand, rejected that part which prohibited war against their own brethren in faith.

93. "*Rūh-ul-Qudus*" (Holy Spirit) May refer to Revelation or to angel Gabriel who brought it to the Prophets or to the Holy Soul of Jesus Christ which Allah had created pure.

"Clear Signs" refer to his miracles and to his wonderful personal qualities and his miraculous birth, which were to every lover of truth a clear proof of the fact that he was a true Prophet of Allah.

94. By this they meant to say, "We are so staunch in our Faith that we are not going to be influenced by anything that you might say to the contrary." All those are slaves of irrational prejudices, delude themselves like this. They regard such an obstinate attitude as a sign of their firm Faith and, therefore, a virtue. In fact, there can be no greater vice than to stick to one's own traditional creeds and beliefs even though there are strong arguments against them.

95. Before the advent of the Holy Prophet, the Jews were looking forward with great longings to the Prophet about whom there were many prophecies in their own Scriptures. They used to pray: "May he come soon so that we should triumph over the disbelievers and regain our lost glory!". The people of Madinah themselves bore witness that the Jews lived in this expectation. It had become a bye-word with them to proclaim: "Let the pagans tyrannise over us as much as they like. When that Prophet comes, we will settle accounts with them." Accordingly, when the people of Madinah learnt that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) had declared himself to be a Prophet, they recalled these things and thought that he might be the very Prophet about whom they had heard so much from the Jews. So they said to one another, "Let us go and accept him lest the Jews should forestall us." That was the reason why the Muslims of Madinah could not understand the attitude of the Jews who, instead of accepting him as the Prophet for whom they had been so anxiously waiting, had become his greatest opponents.

As to the fact that "they did recognize the Holy Prophet," many proofs were furnished at that very time. The most authentic evidence is that of Ḥaḍrat Safiyyah (one of the wives of the Holy Prophet), who was the daughter of one learned Jew and the niece of another. She says, "When the Holy Prophet migrated to Madinah, my father and uncle went to see him. When they returned home, I myself heard the following conversation between them:

Uncle: Is he really the same Prophet about whom there occur prophecies in our books?

Father: By God, he is the same.

U. Are you quite sure of it?

F. Yes.

U. Then what is your intention?

F. I will oppose him as long as I live and will not let his mission succeed. (*Ibn Hisham*, Vol. II, p. 165, Cairo Edition, 1936).

96. The verse may also mean: "What a miserable thing it is for which they have sold off their future life and salvation in the Hereafter!"

97. They wished that the Prophet should have been one of their own race; therefore, they refused to accept him when he was raised among a race which they considered to be inferior to theirs. This meant that Allah ought to have consulted them before appointing His Messenger, and when Allah did not do so, and in His bounty appointed one He chose by Himself, they were offended.

98. This was a retort which implied that if they really were sure and enamoured of the Hereafter, they would not dread death, but would prefer it to the life in this world. They, however, were (and are) so much given to this worldliness that they were terrified by the very thought of death and the Hereafter.

99. The literal translation of the word *'ala hayat-in"* is "any kind of life". It means that they wished to live without giving any consideration to the kind of life they led. It did not matter whether that was a life of honour and grace, or a life of dishonour and disgrace.

100. The Jews not only reviled Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and the believers, but also spoke abusively of Gabriel, the chosen Divine Messenger. They said, "He is our enemy: He is not an angel of blessings but of affliction."

101. As Gabriel revealed the Qur'ān to Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) by Allah's Command, so by abusing Gabriel they actually abused Allah.

102. That is, "You abuse Gabriel for no other reason than that he has brought down the Qur'ān, whereas the Qur'ān confirms the teachings of the Torah; so, in a way, you abuse the Torah as well.

103. In the preceding verses, the Jews have been warned of the consequences of their attitude towards the Qur'ān and the mission of the Holy Prophet. In this part of the verse; they have been admonished to consider the matter from another point of view. As the Qur'ān shows the way to right guidance and brings good tidings to the believers, it is sheer folly to oppose it and reject it. Thus they harm none but themselves by depriving themselves of the true success which follows its acceptance.

104. *Shayatin* may refer both to the devils from among the jinn or to the devils from among human beings. Here it refers to both. When the Jews fell to the lowest depths of degeneration, morally and materially, and lost all the noble qualities because of their captivity, ignorance, poverty, homeless wanderings, etc. they turned to magic, sorcery, enchantment, witchcraft and other black arts and "occult sciences." They began to adopt methods through which they could attain all their ends without putting in any kind of labour and toil. Then the devils began to beguile them by ascribing the origin of the occult sciences to Solomon and proclaimed that Solomon owed his wonderful kingdom and his extraordinary

powers to the occult sciences which they were teaching the people. Jews at once succumbed and welcomed these as a great boon: so much so that even their rabbis began to practise magical arts. Consequently they lost all their interest in the Scriptures and would not listen to those who invited them to Allah's Guidance.

104-a. Here the Quran refutes not only the false accusation of sorcery against Solomon, but also the other charges levelled against him in the Bible (I Kings, Chapter 11). According to it "Solomon was a lover of women and his wives seduced him to follow foreign gods, and he did what was evil in the eyes of the Eternal and put up shrines and idols of their gods." The Quran refutes these charges, so as to say, "Solomon was never involved in any practices of disbelief, and only that one who was a disbeliever could be guilty of 'love of women', 'worship of gods and idols' and what was evil in the eyes of the Eternal."

105. The incident referred to in this verse has been interpreted in different ways, but what I have been able to understand is this: It appears that when the Istraelites were captives in Babylon, Allah sent two angels in human guise to test them. Just as the angels were sent to the people of the Prophet Lot as handsome boys, so they were sent to the Israelites as saints and religious guides. For this purpose, they might have set up an institution to teach magic and might also be warning everyone who came to learn these things, saying: "We are holding out these temptations merely for your trial. You should not, therefore, ruin your Hereafter by seeking this "science". But in spite of this warning, the people came to them in large numbers for talismans, charms and amulets.

There is nothing strange in the coming of angels in human guise. Being agents of Divine Kingdom they are endowed with extraordinary powers to perform their respective duties. As to the question why they taught magic to the people, we can understand this by an illustration. It is like the case of the police who sometimes arrange to hand over signed currency notes to corrupt officials as bribes in order to catch them red-handed. Just as there is nothing wrong in this, so there is nothing wrong in what the angels did for the trial of the degenerate Jews.

106. The greatest demand on this occult science was for an amulet or a device to help separate a wife from her husband in order to entice her. This shows how depraved they had become. Their greatest enjoyment was to make love with other people's wives and to separate them from their husbands. This was the worst form of depravity because it struck at the root of family life which is the very foundation of society. If the relations between husband and wife are sound, the whole society will be sound and solid. But if they are bad, the whole society will become rotten. Thus they were the worst offenders because they cut at the root of those relations on which depended their own solidarity and that of their society.

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يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيْمِ ﴿١٠٥﴾ مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ
اٰيَةٍ اَوْ نُنْسِهَا نَاْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَآ اَوْ مِثْلِهَا ؕ اَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾ اَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَهٗ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ؕ وَمَا
لَكُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ مِنْ وَّلِيٍّ وَّلَا نَصِيْرٍ ﴿١٠٧﴾ اَمْ تُرِيْدُوْنَ اَنْ تَسْـَٔلُوْا رَسُوْلَكُمْ
كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوْسٰى مِنْ قَبْلُ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّتَبَدَّلِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْاِيْمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ
سَوَآءَ السَّبِيْلِ ﴿١٠٨﴾ وَدَّ كَثِيْرٌ مِّنْ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ لَوْ يَرُدُّوْنَكُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ اِيْمَانِكُمْ
كُفَّارًا ۚ حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اَنْفُسِهِمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ ۚ فَاعْفُوْا
وَاصْفَحُوْا حَتّٰى يَاْتِيَ اللّٰهُ بِاَمْرِهٖ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿١٠٩﴾ وَ
اَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ ؕ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوْا لِاَنْفُسِكُمْ مِّنْ خَيْرٍ
تَجِدُوْهُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ﴿١١٠﴾ وَقَالُوْا لَنْ يَّدْخُلَ
الْجَنَّةَ اِلَّا مَنْ كَانَ هُوْدًا اَوْ نَصٰرٰى ؕ تِلْكَ اَمَانِيُّهُمْ ؕ قُلْ هَاتُوْا بُرْهَانَكُمْ
اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿١١١﴾ بَلٰى ۚ مَنْ اَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهٗ لِلّٰهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهٗۤ اَجْرُهٗ
عِنْدَ رَبِّهٖ ۪ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿١١٢﴾ وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُوْدُ لَيْسَتِ
النَّصٰرٰى عَلٰى شَيْءٍ ۪ وَّقَالَتِ النَّصٰرٰى لَيْسَتِ الْيَهُوْدُ عَلٰى شَيْءٍ ۙ وَّهُمْ
يَتْلُوْنَ الْكِتٰبَ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ ۚ فَاللّٰهُ
يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ فِيْمَا كَانُوْا فِيْهِ يَخْتَلِفُوْنَ ﴿١١٣﴾ وَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ
مِمَّنْ مَّنَعَ مَسٰجِدَ اللّٰهِ اَنْ يُّذْكَرَ فِيْهَا اسْمُهٗ وَسَعٰى فِيْ خَرَابِهَا ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ
مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ اَنْ يَّدْخُلُوْهَآ اِلَّا خَآئِفِيْنَ ؕ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَّلَهُمْ
فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿١١٤﴾ وَلِلّٰهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ ۚ فَاَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوْا

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they the people of the Book or the *mushriks*, would never like that any good be sent down to you from your Lord, but Allah chooses for His mercy whom He wills, and Allah is Most Bountiful. 105

We bring a better verse or at least the like of it for whatever We abrogate or cause it to be forgotten.[109] Do you not know that Allah has full power over everything? Do you not know that the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah alone and that you have neither any protector nor helper beside Him? 106-107

Would you then ask your Prophet such questions as were asked of Moses in former times?[110] In fact, anyone, who changes the way of belief for that of disbelief, has surely swerved from the Right Way. Many of the people of the Book desire to turn you anyhow back to unbelief. They wish this out of the envy of their hearts though the Truth has become quite clear to them. Yet, you should show forbearance and forgiveness to them[111] till Allah Himself enforces His judgement. (Rest assured that) Allah has full power over everything: establish the *Salāt* and pay the *Zakat*: you will find with Allah whatever good you send forward for your future; Allah is watching everything you do. 108-110

They say, "None shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew or (according to the Christians) a Christian." These are their wishful fancies. [112]Say to them, "Bring your proof, if you are right in your claim." The fact is that no one has any special claim to Paradise; whoever surrenders himself to Allah in obedience and follows the Right Way, shall get his reward from his Lord: there shall be neither fear nor grief for such people. 111-112

The Jews say that the Christians have nothing (of the Truth) and the Christians say that the Jews have nothing of it, though both read the Scripture. And those who have no knowledge of the Scripture[113] also make similar claims. Allah will surely give His judgement on the Day of Resurrection in all the matters in which they differ. 113

And who could be a greater wrongdoer than the one who forbids the mention of Allah's name in places of worship and strives for their ruin? Such people do not deserve to enter the places of worship, and, if they enter at all, they should do so in fear;[114] for there is ignominy for 114

them in this world and an awful punishment in the Hereafter.

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A Tradition of the Holy Prophet says that Satan sends his agents to the four corners of the world. When they come back to him to report, they relate the deeds they have performed. One says that he has created such and such dispute and the other that he has spread chaos and so on, but Satan goes on commenting, "You have done nothing." Then comes another one who says; "I have caused division between a man and his wife." Satan hugs him and says, "You have indeed done a great deed." In the light of this Tradition, it becomes clear why the two angels were sent to the Israelites with the charm that caused division between man and wife; that was, in fact, the very standard which could measure accurately their moral degradation.

107. From this verse onward, the Believers have been warned to be on their guard against the different kinds of mischief which the Jews were fomenting against Islām and the Islāmic Community. Besides this, doubts and suspicions which were being disseminated by them in the minds and hearts of the Muslims have been removed and those special problems which came up for discussion between the Muslims and the Jews have been dealt with.

Here it should also be kept in view that when the Holy Prophet came to live at Madinah, and Islām began to spread in the country around it, the Jews tried to involve the Muslims in various kinds of religious disputes and theological controversies. They also tried to affect the simple and sincere Muslims with the same disease from which they themselves were suffering, that is, the malady of hair-splitting and asking frivolous and irrelevant questions. For this purpose, they attended even the meetings of the Holy Prophet and resorted to cunning and subtle talk, which showed how depraved they had become.

108. Whenever the Jews came to attend the Holy Prophet's assembly they showed every kind of outward respect to him but surreptitiously tried their worst to insult and slight him. They would use ambiguous words derisively or twist them into an insult by a slight mispronunciation. For instance, if they wanted to invite his attention to any particular thing they would say *"Ra'i-na"* which means "Just pay attention, please," but it has other meanings also. In Hebrew there was a word of similar sound which meant, "Listen, may you become deaf," and in Arabic itself it also meant, "a proud and ignorant person." Besides this, in colloquial speech it meant, "If you listen to us, we will listen to you." Then with a little twist of the tongue it could be turned into *ra-'i-ya-na* which means "Our shepherd". In order to guard against the use of such ambiguous words as sounded complimentary but might be abused by wicked people, the Believers were advised to say, *"unzur-*

na: "Kindly pay attention to us," which could serve the same purpose without having any secondary bad sense like *"ra'i-na."* They were also advised to listen attentively to the Holy Prophet so that there should be no need of inviting his attention.

109. This is the answer to an objection which the Jews raised to create doubts in the minds of the Muslims. They argued like this: The Qur'ān says that the former Scriptures had been sent down by Allah and that it also has been sent down by Him. If it is so, why does the Qur'ān then give such commands as differ from those contained in the former Books? How can the same Allah give different commands at different times? Besides, they said, "The Qur'ān asserts that the Jews and the Christians have forgotten a part of the teachings sent down to them. How is it possible that the teachings of Allah could be obliterated from memory?" They did not raise these objections for the sake of arriving at the truth but for the sake of creating mischief. Allah answers their objections thus: "I am the Sovereign and My powers are unlimited. I can repeal any order of Mine or allow it to be forgotten, but I substitute for it something that serves the same purpose better or at least equally well."

110. The Jews were addicted to hair-splitting. They put subtle and unnecessary questions to the Muslims and would incite them to inquire about the same from the Holy Prophet. As they intended merely to create mischief, Allah warned the Muslims not to follow their example. The Holy Prophet also advised the Believers not to indulge in the pastime of making fine distinctions and asking unnecessary questions because such things had ruined the communities that went before them. They should do what they were asked to do and refrain from what they were prohibited. They should not waste their powers and energies in useless pursuits but attend to important matters.

111. That is "their enmity and jealousy should not incite you to lose your balance of mind and involve you in arguments, discussions and disputes with them. You should not lose your dignity and waste your precious time in such useless pursuits but should go on doing the right and wait patiently for Allah's judgement. You should remember Allah and do good deeds because these are the things that will avail you before Allah and not those things and the like."

112. It means, "In fact these are merely their own wishes, but they assert these as if it were actually going to happen so."

113. It refers to the idolaters of Arabia, who were ignorant of the Scriptures.

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فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿١١٥﴾ وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللّٰهُ وَلَدًا سُبْحٰنَهٗ ؕ
بَلْ لَّهٗ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ؕ كُلٌّ لَّهٗ قٰنِتُوْنَ ﴿١١٦﴾ بَدِيْعُ السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَالْاَرْضِ ؕ وَاِذَا قَضٰٓى اَمْرًا فَاِنَّمَا يَقُوْلُ لَهٗ كُنْ فَيَكُوْنُ ﴿١١٧﴾ وَقَالَ
الَّذِيْنَ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ لَوْلَا يُكَلِّمُنَا اللّٰهُ اَوْ تَاْتِيْنَآ اٰيَةٌ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِيْنَ
مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِّثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ ؕ تَشَابَهَتْ قُلُوْبُهُمْ ؕ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ
يُّوْقِنُوْنَ ﴿١١٨﴾ اِنَّآ اَرْسَلْنٰكَ بِالْحَقِّ بَشِيْرًا وَّنَذِيْرًا ۙ وَّلَا تُسْـَٔلُ عَنْ اَصْحٰبِ
الْجَحِيْمِ ﴿١١٩﴾ وَلَنْ تَرْضٰى عَنْكَ الْيَهُوْدُ وَلَا النَّصٰرٰى حَتّٰى تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ ؕ
قُلْ اِنَّ هُدَى اللّٰهِ هُوَ الْهُدٰى ؕ وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ اَهْوَآءَهُمْ بَعْدَ الَّذِيْ
جَآءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ۙ مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ مِنْ وَّلِيٍّ وَّلَا نَصِيْرٍ ﴿١٢٠﴾ اَلَّذِيْنَ
اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ يَتْلُوْنَهٗ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهٖ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِهٖ ؕ وَمَنْ
يَّكْفُرْ بِهٖ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ ﴿١٢١﴾ يٰبَنِيْٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ اذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتِيَ
الَّتِيْٓ اَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاَنِّيْ فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿١٢٢﴾ وَاتَّقُوْا يَوْمًا لَّا
تَجْزِيْ نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَّفْسٍ شَيْـًٔا وَّلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَّلَا تَنْفَعُهَا
شَفَاعَةٌ وَّلَا هُمْ يُنْصَرُوْنَ ﴿١٢٣﴾ وَاِذِ ابْتَلٰٓى اِبْرٰهٖمَ رَبُّهٗ بِكَلِمٰتٍ فَاَتَمَّهُنَّ ؕ
قَالَ اِنِّيْ جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ اِمَامًا ؕ قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِيْ ؕ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ
عَهْدِي الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿١٢٤﴾ وَاِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَاَمْنًا ؕ وَاتَّخِذُوْا
مِنْ مَّقَامِ اِبْرٰهٖمَ مُصَلًّى ؕ وَعَهِدْنَآ اِلٰٓى اِبْرٰهٖمَ وَاِسْمٰعِيْلَ اَنْ طَهِّرَا
بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّآئِفِيْنَ وَالْعٰكِفِيْنَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُوْدِ ﴿١٢٥﴾ وَاِذْ قَالَ اِبْرٰهٖمُ رَبِّ
اجْعَلْ هٰذَا بَلَدًا اٰمِنًا وَّارْزُقْ اَهْلَهٗ مِنَ الثَّمَرٰتِ مَنْ اٰمَنَ مِنْهُمْ

وقفة لطيفة

The East and the West, all belong to Allah: you will face Allah in whichsoever direction you turn your face:[115] Allah is All-Embracing and All-Knowing.[116] 115

They say "Allah has adopted a son." Allah is above such things. As a matter of fact, whatever is in the heavens and on the earth belongs to Him and all are obedient to Him. He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth: when He decrees a thing, He merely says, "Be," and there it is. 116-117

The ignorant people say, "Why does not Allah Himself talk to us or why does not a Sign come to us?"[117] The people before them also talked like this, for all (who swerve from the Right Path) have the same mentality.[118] We have already shown clear Signs to those who believe;[119] (what greater Sign could there be than that) We have sent you with the knowledge of the Truth and made you a bearer of good tidings and a warner?[120] Now, you are not responsible and answerable for those who are bent upon going to Hell. 118-119

The Jews and the Christians will never be satisfied with you, O Muhammad, until you follow their way.[121] Tell them plainly, "The right way is shown by Allah." And if, after all the knowledge you have received, you were to yield to their desires, you shall find neither any friend nor helper to protect you from Allah's wrath. There are those, even among the people of the Scripture, who read the Book as it should be read and believe in it sincerely;[122] as for those who reject it, they are indeed the losers. 120-121

O children of Israel,[123] remember that special favour I bestowed upon you, and that I exalted you above all the communities of the world. And dread the Day when no one shall avail anyone in any way; nor shall any ransom be accepted from anyone; nor shall intercession profit any body; nor shall the offenders be helped from any quarter. 122-123

Recall to mind that when his Lord put Abraham to test[124] in certain things and he fulfilled all of them, He said, "I am going to make you the leader of mankind." Abraham humbly asked, "Does this promise apply to my descendants also?" He replied, "My promise does not apply to the transgressors."[125] 124

And remember that We made this House (the Ka'bah) the centre 125

and sanctuary for mankind and enjoined the people to dedicate to worship the place where Abraham used to stand for prayer, and We urged Abraham and Ismāīl to keep My House pure for those who would go round it and those who would retire to it for devotion and prayer and for those who would bow down and prostrate themselves there in worhsip.[126]

Contd. on p. 101]

114. That is, the places of worship should not be in the hands of such transgressors, who become their trustees, but under the management of those who possess power and fear Allah. This arrangement will prevent the wicked people from doing any mischief there for fear of retribution. It also implied that the disbelievers of Makkah had quite unjustly prevented their own brethren (who had embraced Islām) from entering the Ka'bah which they themselves called the "House of Allah".

115. That is, "Allah is not confined to any one direction, eastern or western, but is Master of all directions and places. If a particular direction is fixed for worship, it does not mean that Allah resides in that direction only. There is, therefore, no need to enter into disputes as to why a certain direction and place has been fixed instead of the other or why faces were at first turned towards a particular direction but now are being turned towards a different direction and a different place."

116. Allah is neither limited nor narrow-minded nor short-sighted nor indigent, as they suppose He is. On the contrary, His Kingdom is boundless and so are His vision and generosity. He also knows which of His servants remembers Him and also where and when and with what intention.

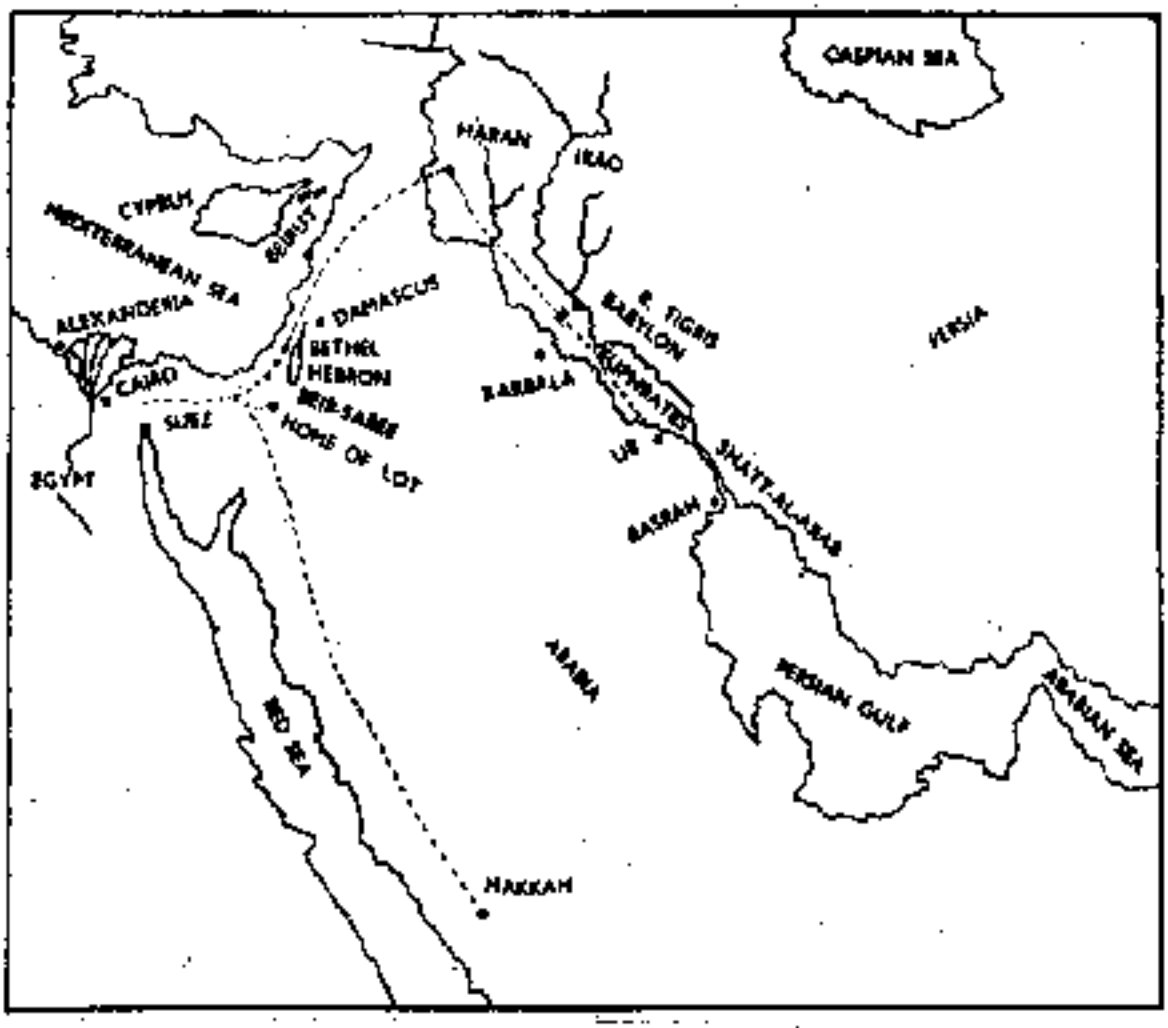
117. They demanded that either Allah Himself should come before them and say, "This is My Book and these are My Instructions for you to follow." Or, He should show such a Sign to them as would conclusively demonstrate that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was really a Messenger of Allah and that what he presented was revealed to him by Allah.

118. That is, "The objections and demands of those who are opposing the Truth today are not new. These are exactly the same as have always been put forward by those who go astray from the Right Way, as all the wicked people of all ages think alike and follow the same line of argument."

119. The demand that Allah Himself should speak to them was so absurd that it needed no reply. As to the other demand that Allah should show them a

MAP

Showing places visited by Prophet Abraham.



Explanation: Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) was born in 'Iraq in the city of Ur. After his escape from the heap of fire, he migrated to Haran. Then he went to Palestine : there he established centres of his mission at Bethel, Hebron and Beir-Sheba. Then he sent his nephew Prophet Lot (Allah's peace be upon him) to the land east of Lot Sea. From Palestine he went to Egypt which was then only second to 'Iraq in civilization and culture. It has not, however, been ascertained whether any centre of his mission was established there or not. From there he went to Hijaz: there he built the "House of Allah" at Makkah and appointed his son Prophet Isma'il (Allah's peace be upon him) as its guardian. After this he made Hebron (Palestine) his permanent centre. When he died there, his second son Prophet Isaac (Allah's peace be upon him) continued his mission and after him Prophet Jacob (Allah's peace be upon him). They understood perfectly well that there was nothing in these things that could have been conducive to the great and wonderful deeds he performed as a Prophet; therefore he was really a Messenger of Allah. As a matter of fact, it was such a clear Sign that no other Sign was needed after this.

Sign, Allah answers that He has shown many clear Signs but those who are not inclined to believe cannot see them.

120. Not to speak of the other Signs, the most conspicuous Sign was the personality of Muhammad himself (Allah's peace be upon him). They knew everything about his life before Prophethood; the conditions of his country and nation and the circumstances and environment under which he was brought up and how he spent the first forty years of his life before his appointment as a Prophet;

121. That is, "The reason why these people are displeased with you is not that they are sincere seekers after Truth and that you have failed to make it as clear to them as it should have been. On the contrary, they are offended with you just because you have made the Truth so clear that no loop-hole has been left for them to make religion a paying concern for the gratification of their desires and lusts. Therefore leave them alone and do not try to reconcile them because it is not possible to please them unless you also adopt the same attitude towards religion as they have adopted. They would have been very happy with you, if you had acted hypocritically like them and made God-worship a cloak for self-worship. It is impossible to please them unless you follow their bad example in your beliefs and practices."

122. The reference is to the pious among the people of the Book, who study the Qur'ān honestly and sincerely and accept as true what is true according to the Book of Allah.

123. From here begins a new discourse. In order to understand it, the following should be kept in mind :

(1) After Noah, Abraham was the first Prophet who was appointed by Allah to spread the universal Message of Islām. He began his mission in his own country, 'Iraq, and invited the people to Islām (submission to Allah). Then he visited Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Arabia with the same mission. Afterwards he appointed his deputies in different places. He deputed Lot, his nephew, to Trans-Jordān, Isaac, his son, to Syria and Palestine, and Ismā'il, the elder son, to Arabia. Then he was commanded by Allah to build at Makkah that house of worship which is called the Ka'bah and to make it the centre of his mission.

(2) From the two sons of the Prophet Abraham sprang two nations -- Ismā'ilites and Israelites. The former were the descendants of Ishmael who settled in Arabia. The Quraish and some other Arab clans were his direct descendants but even those Arab clans which were not his descendants claimed to be Ismā'ilites because they were more or less influenced by his mission. The latter, the Israelites, were the descendants of Jacob, son of Isaac. Jospeh, Moses, David, Solomon, John, Jesus (may Allah's peace be upon them all)

and many other Prophets rose from among them. They were called Israelites after Israel, the second name of Jacob. Some other people who accepted their religion also merged into them. All the Prophets of Israel, including Jesus, preached Islām, submission to Allah, but when the Israelites became degenerate and lost their religion (Islām) they invented Judaism and later Christianity.

(3) Abraham was appointed to invite the world to surrender to Allah and to reform the people in accordance with Allah's Guidance. He himself surrendered and acted upon the knowledge he received from Allah and exerted his utmost to propagate that knowledge and to persuade all the people to submit to the Sovereign of the Universe. Therefore he was made the leader of the world. Afterwards this leadership, with all its responsibilities, was transferred to the Israelites, the descendants of Isaac and Jacob. This was the special favour which the Israelites were asked, over and over again, to remember. Accordingly, during the time of Solomon, the Holy Temple at Jerusalem became the centre and the *qiblah* (the place towards which face is to be turned for prayer) of all the worshippers of Allah, as long as the Israelites remaind the leaders of this mission.

(4) In the foregoing address (vv.40-121), Allah has charged the Israelites with their sins of omission and commission during their leadership. Therefore the Qur'ān points out their moral condition and tells them plainly, "You have proved yourselves quite unworthy of the favour shown to you. You have not only neglected to perform the obligations of leadership but have also discarded the Guidance of Allah from your own lives. Now the things have come to such a pass that you have become a community utterly unfit for leadership."

(5) Now they are being told that leadership is not the privilege of the descendants of Abraham as such, for none has any exclusive claim to it by the mere accident of birth. It was bestowed only upon those who submitted to Allah and followed His Guidance like Abraham. As they have swerved from that Way, and proved utterly unworthy of leadership, they are deposed from it.

(6) It also implied that the non-Israelite followers of the Prophet Moses and Jesus, who were proud of their relationship with Abraham had also swerved from the way of Abraham. Similarly, the idolaters of Arabia, who were also proud of their relationship with Abraham and Ismāil have been told that they too were utterly unworthy of leadership, for they, too, had swerved from the Way of Abraham and Ismāil.

(7) Now that the Israelites had been deposed from leadership, the argument proceeds to show why Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was raised as a Prophet from among the descendants of Ismāil, in answer to the prayer of

Abraham and Ismāil. It is because he followed the same Way as was followed by Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and all the Prophets before him. He and his followers believed in all the Prophets sent by Allah, and invited the world to the same Way that was shown by the former Prophets. Therefore the followers of this Prophet alone were worthy of that leadership.

(8) With the transfer of leadership, it was essential to change its centre as well. As long as the Israelites were the leaders, the Holy Temple at Jerusalem was the centre and *qiblah* of all the followers of the Truth. That was why the Holy Prophet and his followers also used to turn their faces at first towards it at prayer. But when the Israelites were deposed from leadership, the Holy Temple automatically ceased to be the *qiblah*. It was therefore, declared that the Ka'bah at Makkah, where Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) started his mission, is to be the *qiblah* in future. As it also was the centre of Abraham's mission, neither the Israelites nor the Arabs could object to it because both acknowledged Abraham as their Prophet and ancestor. Thus there was no reason left for them to raise any objection against making the Ka'bah the centre of the Divine mission. But the fact is that obdurate people will go on arguing against the Truth even after knowing it to be the Truth.

(9) After declaring the Muslims to be the leaders, with the Ka'bah as their centre, Allah gives instructions (vv. 153-286) for their guidance to enable them to carry out their obligations as leaders of the world.

124. At different places the Qur'ān has described in detail the hard test to which Abraham was put before he was made the leader and guide of mankind. When he passed successfully through all those trials and proved himself fit and capable of performing this great responsibility, he was exalted to this high position. Ever since the Truth was revealed to him, his whole life was a series of sacrifices in its cause. He sacrificed everything which is valued in life, and encountered every kind of danger in the way of Truth.

125. That is, "This promise shall apply only to those of your descendants who will be good and capable, and not to those who will be transgressors." Thus, obviously, the misguided children of Israel and the idolatrous children of Ishmael were not entitled to this promise.

126. The purification of the House was not only to be from rubbish but also from all kinds of false worship so that the name of Allah alone should be glorified in it. The real purification of Allah's House is that no other name than His should be mentioned in it. For the worship of anyone else or the invoking of any other name for help really polluted the House. This verse charges, in a subtle manner, the Quraish with the crime of keeping idols in the Ka'bah and

[Contd. on p.110

بِاللّٰهِ وَ الْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ ؕ قَالَ وَ مَنْ كَفَرَ فَاُمَتِّعُهٗ قَلِيْلًا ثُمَّ اَضْطَرُّهٗۤ اِلٰى
عَذَابِ النَّارِ ؕ وَ بِئْسَ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿۱۲۶﴾ وَ اِذْ يَرْفَعُ اِبْرٰهٖمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ
وَ اِسْمٰعِيْلُ ؕ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا ؕ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿۱۲۷﴾ رَبَّنَا وَ
اجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَاۤ اُمَّةً مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ ۠ وَ اَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا
وَ تُبْ عَلَيْنَا ۚ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿۱۲۸﴾ رَبَّنَا وَ ابْعَثْ فِيْهِمْ رَسُوْلًا
مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتِكَ وَ يُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَ الْحِكْمَةَ وَ يُزَكِّيْهِمْ ؕ اِنَّكَ
اَنْتَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿۱۲۹﴾ وَ مَنْ يَّرْغَبُ عَنْ مِّلَّةِ اِبْرٰهٖمَ اِلَّا مَنْ سَفِهَ
نَفْسَهٗ ؕ وَ لَقَدِ اصْطَفَيْنٰهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَ اِنَّهٗ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿۱۳۰﴾
اِذْ قَالَ لَهٗ رَبُّهٗۤ اَسْلِمْ ۙ قَالَ اَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿۱۳۱﴾ وَ وَصّٰى بِهَاۤ
اِبْرٰهٖمُ بَنِيْهِ وَ يَعْقُوْبُ ؕ يٰبَنِيَّ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ اصْطَفٰى لَكُمُ الدِّيْنَ فَلَا
تَمُوْتُنَّ اِلَّا وَ اَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۲﴾ اَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَآءَ اِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوْبَ
الْمَوْتُ ۙ اِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيْهِ مَا تَعْبُدُوْنَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِيْ ؕ قَالُوْا نَعْبُدُ اِلٰهَكَ
وَ اِلٰهَ اٰبَآئِكَ اِبْرٰهٖمَ وَ اِسْمٰعِيْلَ وَ اِسْحٰقَ اِلٰهًا وَّاحِدًا ۚ وَ نَحْنُ
لَهٗ مُسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۳﴾ تِلْكَ اُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ ۚ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَ لَكُمْ مَّا
كَسَبْتُمْ ۚ وَ لَا تُسْـَٔلُوْنَ عَمَّا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۴﴾ وَ قَالُوْا كُوْنُوْا هُوْدًا
اَوْ نَصٰرٰى تَهْتَدُوْا ؕ قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ اِبْرٰهٖمَ حَنِيْفًا ؕ وَ مَا كَانَ مِنَ
الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ﴿۱۳۵﴾ قُوْلُوْۤا اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَ مَاۤ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْنَا وَ مَاۤ اُنْزِلَ اِلٰۤى
اِبْرٰهٖمَ وَ اِسْمٰعِيْلَ وَ اِسْحٰقَ وَ يَعْقُوْبَ وَ الْاَسْبَاطِ وَ مَاۤ اُوْتِيَ مُوْسٰى
وَ عِيْسٰى وَ مَاۤ اُوْتِيَ النَّبِيُّوْنَ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ۚ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ ۖ

And remember that Abraham prayed, "Lord, make this city a city of peace and security, and provide with every kind of fruit those of its people, who believe in Allah and the Last Day". Allah answered, "As for the disbelievers, I will also provide them with the necessities of life in this world,[127] though in the Next World I will drag them to the torment of Hell, and that is the worst abode." 126

And remember that when Abraham and Ishmael were raising the walls of the House, they prayed, "Lord, accept this service from us; You are All-Hearing and All-Knowing. Lord, make us Your Muslims (submissive servants) and also raise from our offspring a community which should be Muslim (submissive to Your Will). Show us the ways of Your worship and forbear our shortcomings: You are Forgiving and Merciful. Lord, raise up from among them a Messenger who shall recite Your Revelations to them and teach them the Book and Wisdom and purify their lives:[128] You art All-Powerful and All-Wise".[129] 127-129

Now, who else can have aversion to the way of Abraham but the one who has debased himself with folly and ignorance? Abraham was the man whom We chose for Our service in this world, and in the Next World he shall be among the righteous. When his Lord said to him, "Surrender,"[130] he promptly responded, "I have surrendered to the Lord of the Universe (and become a Muslim)." He also enjoined on his children to follow the same way. Jacob also did the same[131] and his last will to his sons was, "O my children, Allah has chosen the same way of life[132] for you. Hence remain Muslims up to your last breath." Were you present at the time when Jacob was on the point of death? He asked his chidren, "Whom will you worship after me?" They all answered, "We will worship the same One Allah Whom you, your forefathers Abraham, Ismāil and Isaac acknowledged as their Allah and to Him we all surrender as Muslims."[133] 130-133

They were a people who passed away; they shall receive the reward of what they earned and you shall have the reward of what you will earn; and you will not be questioned as to what they did.[134] 134

The Jews say, "Become Jews and you will be rightly guided"; the Christians say, "Become Christians and you will have the true guidance." Say to them, "Nay, we turn away from every other way 135-136

and accept the way of Abraham, and Abraham did not associate other gods with Allah."[135] O Muslims, say to them, "We believe in Allah and the Guidance which has been sent down to us and which was sent to Abraham, Ismāil, Isaac and Jacob and his descendants and which was given by their Lord to Moses and Jesus and to all other Prophets. We do not discriminate against any of them[136] and we have completely surrendered to Allah as Muslims."

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worshipping them instead of Allah. It implies that these idolaters who were proud of being the heirs of Abraham and Ismāil were not discharging the obligations of that heritage. Hence they, like the Israelites, have forfeited all rights to the promise of Allah made to Abraham.

127. When Abraham prayed to Allah to provide his descendants with the necessities of life, he excluded from his prayer the would-be transgressors, because Allah had excluded them from His promise of leadership. Allah, however, removed his misunderstanding immediately, saying, "There is a great difference between the two things. While the righteous leadership will be bestowed upon the true believers only, the necessities of life will be given to both the believers and the unbelievers."

It also implies that the possession of wealth is not the standard to judge whether Allah is pleased with one or not. If one is given abundance of wealth, it does not necessarily mean that Allah is pleased with him and considers him to be worthy of leadership as well.

128. "Purify their lives:" purify their beliefs, ideas, deeds, habits, customs, culture, politics, in short, every aspect of life.

129. As Allah has full powers and perfect wisdom, He granted this prayer of the Prophet Abraham and made Ḥadrat Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) His Messenger.

130. The word used in the text is "*aslim*," that is, "become a Muslim," or "adopt the attitude of Islām" (surrender to the will of Allah). Thus a Muslim is one who surrenders himself completely to Allah and obeys Him; who acknowledges Allah alone as His Lord, Master, Sovereign, Ruler, Lawgiver and God of worship; and who adopts the way of life prescribed by Him. Islām is the religious system based on this creed and attitude. This was the religion of all the Prophets who came to different countries and different nations.

131. Special mention of Jacob has been made because the Israelites were his direct descendants.

132. The Arabic word *"dīn"* has a much wider scope than the English word "religion".It covers life in its entirety, and no aspect of individual or community life is outside its realm.

133. Though Jacob's death has been described in detail in the Bible, no mention has been made of this last will of his. It, however, has been given in detail in the Talmud and its substance is more or less the same as that contained in the Qur'ān:

"At the time when Jacob quitted this world, he summoned his sons and said to them, 'Serve the Lord your God, and He will deliver ye from all trouble, even as He delivered your fathers ..... Teach your children to love God, and observe His commandments, for God will guard those who do justly and walk in righteousness through all his ways .....' And the sons of Jacob responded, 'All that you have commanded us, our father!, we will do. May God be with us.' And Jacob answered: 'The Lord will be with ye if ye shall depart not from His ways to the right hand or the left'."

The same thing about the Prophet Jacob's will has been cited by Rodwell from Midr. Rabbah, "Have ye any doubts in your hearts concerning the Holy One, blessed be He." They said, "Hear O Israel, our Father. As there is no doubt in thy heart, so neither is there in ours. For the Lord is our God, and He is One."

134. That is, "Though you are their descendants, you have no real connection with them; nor have you auy right to claim relationship with them, when you have swerved from their way. Allah will not ask you what your forefathers did but He will ask you what you yourselves did."

What we call our "actions and deeds" are, according to the Qur'ān, our earnings, because every action and every deed either produces a good result or a bad consequence. If it is good, Allah will be pleased with us and give us its due reward. If it is bad, He will inflict due punishment upon us. The Qur'ān refers to actions and deeds as earnings in order to focus attention on the serious results produced by them.

135. In order to understand the true significance of this answer, two things should be kept in mind:

(1) Judaism and Christianity were born long after the death of Abraham. Judaism, with its special rituals, peculiar regulations, etc., took its birth and name some four hundred years before Christ. As to "Christianity", it took its name and adopted its special creed and form long after the recall of Jesus. Thus it is clear that their claim that one must become a Jew or a Christian in

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وَنَحْنُ لَهٗ مُسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿136﴾ فَاِنْ اٰمَنُوْا بِمِثْلِ مَآ اٰمَنْتُمْ بِهٖ فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا ۚ
وَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاِنَّمَا هُمْ فِيْ شِقَاقٍ ۚ فَسَيَكْفِيْكَهُمُ اللّٰهُ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيْعُ
الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿137﴾ صِبْغَةَ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَمَنْ اَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ صِبْغَةً ۚ وَّنَحْنُ لَهٗ
عٰبِدُوْنَ ﴿138﴾ قُلْ اَتُحَآجُّوْنَنَا فِي اللّٰهِ وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ ۚ وَلَنَآ اَعْمَالُنَا وَ
لَكُمْ اَعْمَالُكُمْ ۚ وَنَحْنُ لَهٗ مُخْلِصُوْنَ ﴿139﴾ اَمْ تَقُوْلُوْنَ اِنَّ اِبْرٰهٖمَ وَ
اِسْمٰعِيْلَ وَاِسْحٰقَ وَيَعْقُوْبَ وَالْاَسْبَاطَ كَانُوْا هُوْدًا اَوْ نَصٰرٰى ۗ قُلْ
ءَاَنْتُمْ اَعْلَمُ اَمِ اللّٰهُ ۗ وَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَتَمَ شَهَادَةً عِنْدَهٗ مِنَ
اللّٰهِ ۗ وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿140﴾ تِلْكَ اُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ ۚ لَهَا مَا
كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَّا كَسَبْتُمْ ۚ وَلَا تُسْـَٔلُوْنَ عَمَّا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿141﴾

سَيَقُوْلُ السُّفَهَآءُ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَا وَلّٰىهُمْ عَنْ قِبْلَتِهِمُ الَّتِيْ كَانُوْا عَلَيْهَا

قُلْ لِّلّٰهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ ۗ يَهْدِيْ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ اِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴿142﴾
وَكَذٰلِكَ جَعَلْنٰكُمْ اُمَّةً وَّسَطًا لِّتَكُوْنُوْا شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُوْنَ
الرَّسُوْلُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيْدًا ۗ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِيْ كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَآ اِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ
مَنْ يَّتَّبِعُ الرَّسُوْلَ مِمَّنْ يَّنْقَلِبُ عَلٰى عَقِبَيْهِ ۗ وَاِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيْرَةً اِلَّا
عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ هَدَى اللّٰهُ ۗ وَمَا كَانَ اللّٰهُ لِيُضِيْعَ اِيْمَانَكُمْ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِالنَّاسِ
لَرَءُوْفٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿143﴾ ۝ قَدْ نَرٰى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَآءِ ۚ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً
تَرْضٰىهَا ۪ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۗ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوْا
وُجُوْهَكُمْ شَطْرَهٗ ۗ وَاِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ لَيَعْلَمُوْنَ اَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ۗ
وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿144﴾ وَلَئِنْ اَتَيْتَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ

Then if they believe the way you have believed, they have the right guidance, and if they turn away from this, it will become obvious that they are obdurate. Therefore, rest assured that Allah will suffice to defend you against them: He hears everything and knows everything. 137

Say, "Take Allah's colour,[137] and who can give a better colour than Allah? Therefore, we worship and submit to Him alone." 138

O Prophet, say to them, "Do you argue with us concerning Allah, whereas He is our Lord and also your Lord?[138] We shall be accountable to Him for our deeds and you for yours; so we have dedicated our worship to Him alone.[139] Or do you say that Abraham, Ismāil , Isaac, Jacob and his children were all Jews or Christians?" Ask them, "Do you know more than Allah does?[140] And who is more unjust than the one who hides the testimony which Allah has entrusted to him? Allah is not unaware of what you are doing.[141] They were a people who have passed away and they shall be repaid for what they earned and you for what you earn: you will not be questioned as to what they did." 139-141

Of course, the foolish people will say, "What has turned them abruptly away from the *qiblah* towards which they formerly used to turn their faces in prayer?"[142] Tell them, O Messenger, "East and West all belong to Allah; He shows the Right Way to anyone He wills."[143] Thus have We made you a Community of the "Golden Mean" so that you may be witnesses in regard to mankind and the Messenger may be a witness in regard to you.[144] 142

We had appointed the former *qiblah* towards which you used to turn your face merely to test who would follow the Messenger and who would turn back.[145] It was indeed a hard test but not for those who had been blessed with Guidance from Allah. Allah will not let go to waste this faith of yours; rest assured that He is full of pity and mercy for mankind. 143

We have seen you (O Muhammad), turning your face over and over again towards Heaven. Now, therefore, We turn you towards the *qiblah* that you like best: so turn your face towards the Masjid Haram. Henceforth, wheresoever you may be, turn your face at prayer towards it.[146] 44

the people who were given the Book know it well that the commandment (about the change of *qiblah*) is in fact from their Lord, and is based on the Truth, but Allah is not unaware of what they are doing (in spite of this)

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order to obtain guidance was historically untenable. For in that case, Abraham, Jesus and all the other Prophets and all the good people who had passed away long before the birth of Judaism and Christianity could not be counted among the right-guided persons for the simple reason that these "religions" did not exist at the time they lived. Thus, it was obvious that the Jews and Christians could not say that these Prophets were not right-guided, nor could they claim that they followed Judaism or Christianity. As a corollary to this, true Guidance did not, even according to them, consist of the particular features which divided them into two distinct religions, but it was that eternal universal way which has been shown by all the Messengers of Allah and which has always been followed by the good people of all ages.

(2) It also meant to warn the Jews and the Christians that both practised *shirk* and had, therefore, swerved from the way of Abraham, who did not associate any other object with Allah in his worship, his reverence, his submission and his obedience to Him. They could not deny this because their own Scriptures bore testimony to it.

136. "We do not discriminate against any of them" means that we believe in all the Prophets of Allah and reject none. It is obvious that all the Prophets who came from Allah brought the same Truth and invited the people to the same Guidance and Right Way. Hence anyone who follows the Truth must accept all the Prophets. Those who accept one Prophet and reject the other really reject even the one whom they profess to accept. Had they followed the universal Guidance taught by Moses, Jesus and other Prophets, they could not have rejected any other Prophet (i.e. Muhammad, Allah's peace be upon him). As a matter of fact, they were not following the teachings of any Prophet, but merely professing to accept their own Prophets just because their fathers did so. Thus their real religion was prejudice, race-worship and blind imitation of their forefathers.

137. It may also mean, "We took Allah's colour." Before the advent of Christianity, it was a custom among the Jews to give a bath to those who accepted Judaism. It meant to imply that all the sins of the baptised person were washed away and he had received a new colour of life. This same custom was later on adopted by the Christians and it was termed "Baptism", which is a ceremonial immersion in water or an application of water as an initiatory rite or sacrament of

the Christian Church. It is applied not only to the new converts but also to all newly-born babies.

The Qur'ān says that there is nothing substantial in this ceremonial "colouring," since it is not necessary for salvation. For this purpose one should take colour from Allah by adopting His Way and submitting to His Law.

138. That is, "What we only say is that Allah is Lord of all of us, and we should all submit to Him. Why should you then have any dispute with us concerning Allah? Is it a thing concerning which you should have any dispute with us? As a matter of fact, it is we who have a cause of dispute and not you, for it is you (and not we) who associate other objects of worship with Allah."

The original Arabic words may also mean: "Are you having a dispute with us for the sake of Allah....?" It would then mean: "If you really are having a dispute with us for the sake of Allah and not for the sake of prejudice or worldly interests, it can be settled amicably."

139. That is, "You are responsible for your deeds and we are for ours. If you have associated other partners with Allah in His Godhead and if you worship and obey them, you are free to do so but you yourselves will bear its consequences. As to the dispute between us, it can be ended if you allow us the same freedom of worship that we allow you. When we do not dispute with you about your associating other gods with Allah, you should at least concede us the right to worship the One Allah without associating any partner with Him, Whom we have chosen for exclusive worship and submission."

140. This question was adddressed to the common people of the Jews and Christians, who in their ignorance sincerely believed that all these great Prophets were Jews or Christians.

141. This question was addressed to their scholars, who were not ignorant of the fact that Judaism and Christianity with their special rituals, etc., were the products of a later age. In spite of this they were under the delusion that the Truth was confined to their own sects, and they kept their common people under the delusion that salvation depended on those beliefs, ways and regulations, which had been invented, long after the Prophets, by their own rabbis and priests, spiritual leaders and interpreters. Whenever they were confronted with the question: "To which of these sects of yours did Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and other Prophets belong?", they would never answer this directly. For they could not claim that those Prophets belonged to their particular sect as they knew that history proved that claim to be absurd. But, in spite of this established fact, they could not admit it in clear words that the Prophets were neither Jews nor Christians, because this would have automatically refuted their claims.

142. After the Hijrah the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) continued to turn his face in the Prayer towards the Temple (at Jerusalem) for about 16 or 17 months; then he was commanded to turn his face towards the Ka'bah (at Makkah). This change of the qiblah (direction of Prayer) with its implications has been described in detail in the succeeding verses.

143. Those foolish people who did not have the sense to appreciate the true significance of this change began to raise different kinds of objections in order to create doubts in the minds of the Believers. Being narrow-minded, they thought that Allah was confined to a particular point or direction and the change of qiblah meant turning away from Him. This absurd objection has been removed by the declaration that east, west and all other directions belong to Allah. The fact that the qiblah lies in a certain direction does not mean that Allah is confined to that direction only. Those people who are blessed with guidance cannot entertain such narrow ideas. (Also refer to E.N.'s 115 and 116).

144. This is the declaration of the leadership of the Muslim Community. "Thus" refers both to the Guidance of Allah which was sent through Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and to the change of the *qiblah*. It was by following the Guidance that the Muslims achieved those excellences which led to their appointment as the "Community of the Golden Mean," and it was the change of the *qiblah* from the Temple to the Ka'bah that was an indication that the Israelites had been deposed from the leadership and the Muslims had been appointed to it. Therefore the change of the *qiblah* from the Temple to the Ka'bah was not merely a change of direction as the foolish people took it to be, but it was really the formal declaration of the change of leadership from the Israelites to the followers of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him).

The word *"ummat wasat"* is so comprehensive in meaning that no English word can correctly convey its full sense. It is a righteous and noble community which does not go beyond proper limits, but follows the middle course and deals out justice evenly to the nations of the world as an impartial judge, and bases all its relations with other nations on truth and justice.

The meaning of "We have appointed you as *ummat wasat* so that you may be witnesses in regard to mankind and the Messenger may be a witness in regard to you" is: On the Judgement Day when all mankind will be called to account together, the Messenger, as Our authorised representative, will give evidence in regard to you to prove that he had imparted to you, by word and by deed, without any reservation, the whole teaching of sound thought, righteous deed and justice given by Us. Then you, being representatives of the Messenger, in your turn, will be required to give evidence to prove that you had done your utmost to impart, by

word and deed, to mankind whatever the Messenger had imparted to you just as you had received it from the Messenger.

Thus, a person or group's being appointed by God a witness by itself amounts to its being exalted to the office of leadership and religious guide in the world. Though it is a position of honour, it carries very onerous responsibilities with it. It requires that the Muslim Community should become a living witness of piety, truth and justice before the world just as the Holy Prophet bore witness before it, and its words and deeds should suffice to demonstrate to the world the meaning of truth, justice and piety. It also implies that it is a great responsibility for which the Muslim Community is accountable. Just as the Holy Prophet was responsible for conveying the Guidance of Allah, so the Muslims are responsible for conveying it to the people of the world. If they fail to prove in the Court of Allah that they have discharged this responsibility to the best of their ability, they will be condemned there. And they along with their evil geniuses and accomplices shall be accountable for all the evils which prevailed during their term of leadership, if they had shown any relaxation in the performance of their obligation as witnesses of the Truth. On the Day of Judgement, Allah will surely ask, "What did you do to prevent it when you saw the epidemic of sin, tyranny and impiety breaking out in the world?"

145. The change of the *qiblah* also served to separate the Believers from the slaves of prejudice and racialism. On the one side, there were the Arabs who were not ready to give up their own Ka'bah and to adopt the Temple at Jerusalem as the *qiblah*. They were tried first. It was a hard test but the sincere believers passed successfully through this and the worshippers of the idol of nationalism failed. Now when the qiblah was changed from Jerusalem to the Ka'bah, those Jews and Christians who had embraced Islām were put to the test. It was very difficult for them to accept any other *qiblah* than the one of their forefathers. Thus the worshippers of race, who turned back from Islām were separated from the worshippers of Allah and finally the worshippers of Allah only remained with the Holy Prophet.

146. This is the commandment for the change of the *qiblah*, which was enjoined in Rajab or Sha'ban, A.H. 2. When this was revealed, according to Ibn Sa'd, the Holy Prophet was leading the Zuhr (early afternoon) prayer in the house of Bishr bin Bara' bin Ma'rur where he had gone in response to an invitation. This verse was revealed when he had gone through half of the prayer. He at once turned his face towards the Ka'bah during the prayer and those who were saying their Prayer following his lead did the same. Afterwards it was announced publicly in Madinah and its suburbs that the *qiblah* had been changed. Bara' bin 'Azib says

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بِكُلِّ اٰيَةٍ مَّا تَبِعُوْا قِبْلَتَكَ ۚ وَمَآ اَنْتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا بَعْضُهُمْ بِتَابِعٍ
قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ ۭ وَلَىِٕنِ اتَّبَعْتَ اَهْوَاۗءَهُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَاۗءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ۙ
اِنَّكَ اِذًا لَّمِنَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿145﴾ اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ يَعْرِفُوْنَهٗ كَمَا يَعْرِفُوْنَ
وقف لازم
لتقدم
اَبْنَاۗءَهُمْ ۭ وَاِنَّ فَرِيْقًا مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُوْنَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿146﴾ اَلْحَقُّ مِنْ
رَّبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِيْنَ ﴿147﴾ وَلِكُلٍّ وِّجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّيْهَا فَاسْتَبِقُوا
الْخَيْرٰتِ ۭ اَيْنَ مَا تَكُوْنُوْا يَاْتِ بِكُمُ اللّٰهُ جَمِيْعًا ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰي كُلِّ
وقف لازم
لتقدم
شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿148﴾ وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۭ
وَاِنَّهٗ لَلْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ ۭ وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿149﴾ وَمِنْ حَيْثُ
خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۭ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوْا
وُجُوْهَكُمْ شَطْرَهٗ ۙ لِئَلَّا يَكُوْنَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ ۣ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا
مِنْهُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِيْ ۣ وَلِاُتِمَّ نِعْمَتِيْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ
تَهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿150﴾ كَمَآ اَرْسَلْنَا فِيْكُمْ رَسُوْلًا مِّنْكُمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ اٰيٰتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيْكُمْ
معانقة ٣
وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمْ مَّا لَمْ تَكُوْنُوْا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿151﴾ فَاذْكُرُوْنِيْٓ
اَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوْا لِيْ وَلَا تَكْفُرُوْنِ ﴿152﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اسْتَعِيْنُوْا بِالصَّبْرِ
وَالصَّلٰوةِ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ﴿153﴾ وَلَا تَقُوْلُوْا لِمَنْ يُّقْتَلُ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ
اللّٰهِ اَمْوَاتٌ ۭ بَلْ اَحْيَاۗءٌ وَّلٰكِنْ لَّا تَشْعُرُوْنَ ﴿154﴾ وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ
الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوْعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْاَمْوَالِ وَالْاَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرٰتِ ۭ وَبَشِّرِ
الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ﴿155﴾ الَّذِيْنَ اِذَآ اَصَابَتْهُمْ مُّصِيْبَةٌ ۙ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَاِنَّآ اِلَيْهِ
رٰجِعُوْنَ ﴿156﴾ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوٰتٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۟ وَاُولٰۗىِٕكَ هُمُ

Even though you may show every kind of sign to the people of the Book, they will not adopt your *qiblah*, nor are you going to adopt their *qiblah;* nor will any of them adopt the *qiblah* of the other; therefore if, after the knowledge you have received, you follow their desires, you will certainly be counted among the transgressors.[147] As for those to whom We gave the Book, they recognise the place (which has now been made *qiblah*), as clearly as they recognise their own children.[148] But some of them are knowingly concealing the truth. This is in fact a Commandment from your Lord; so you should not have any doubt concerning this. 145-147

Everyone has a direction towards which he turns in Prayer: so try to excel one another in good works.[149] Allah will find you wheresoever you be, for nothing is out of Allah's reach. 148

At whatever place you may be, turn your face towards Masjid Haram (at Prayer time) for this is, in fact, a Commandment of your Lord, and Allah is not unaware of what you do. At whatever place you may be, you must turn your face towards the Masjid Haram, and wherever you may be, you must turn your face towards the same at prayer so that people might not find an argument against you.[150] As for the unjust people, they will never stop talking; so do not fear them but fear Me -- (Do this) so that I may complete My favour[151] upon you and you may find the way to real success,[152] just as (you have found from this: that) We sent the Messenger to you from among you, who recites to you Our Revelations; who purifies your lives; who instructs you in the Book and in Wisdom and teaches you those things that you did not know. So remember Me and I will remember you, and give thanks to Me and be not ungrateful. 149-152

O Believers,[153] seek help with fortitude and *Salāt*, for Allah is with those who show fortitude.[154] And do not say of those who are slain in the way of Allah, "they are dead." In fact, they are alive but you do not perceive that life.[155] We will surely put you to trial by involving you in fear and hunger and by causing loss of property, life and earnings. And give good tidings to those who remain steadfast in these trials: when a misfortune comes to them, they say, "We are Allah's and we shall certainly return to Him."[156] Their Lord will bestow great blessings and mercy upon them; such are the people who 153-157

are rightly guided.

Contd. from p. 117]

that at one place this announcement was heard at a time when the people had bent down in the Prayer. But when they heard the commandment, they turned about in the same posture towards the Ka'bah. Anas bin Malik says that the people of Bani Salāmah heard of the change of the *qiblah* next morning at a time when they had already gone through half of the Prayer. As soon as they heard the announcement: "Beware, the *qiblah* has been changed to the Ka'bah," the whole congregation turned about towards the Ka'bah.

In this connection, it should also be kept in mind that the Holy Temple at Jerusalem is to the north of Madinah and the Ka'bah at Makkah to the south of it. The Imam (who led the Prayer) must have walked to the rear of the congregation, who had to turn about and also to move about a little in order to adjust the rows. All these things have been related in detail in the Traditions.

Moreover, it is quite clear from "We have seen you turn your face over and over again towards heaven" and "We turn you towards the *qiblah* that you like best" that the Holy Prophet used to pray for, and was expecting this change, for he himself was feeling that the term of the leadership of the Israelites had come to an end and consequently Jerusalem had also ceased to be the centre. Therefore Ka'bah which had been set up by the Prophet Abraham should be the *qiblah*.

"Masjid Haram" means the "Inviolable place of worship and reverence". It refers to that place of worship at Makkah which has the Ka'bah in its centre.

The Commandment "Turn your face towards the Ka'abah" does not mean that one should turn one's face exactly to the point of the Ka'abah from every part of the globe. Obviously it is very difficult for everyone to do so at all times from all places of the globe. That is why the Qur'an directs us to turn our faces towards the Ka'abah and not to the point of the Ka'abah ; We should do our best to find out the exact direction of the Ka'abah ; then if we are satisfied that a certain direction is most probably the correct direction, we should turn our faces towards it. But when it is not possible to ascertain the exact direction (for example, in a boat or a train, etc.) one should turn one's face to the probable right direction, and if during the prayer the correct direction is found out, one should turn one's face towards it at once.

147. That is, "You cannot convince by argument those who are disputing with you about the wisdom of the change of the *qiblah* because they are not disposed to listen to any reasoning on account of their deep prejudices and obduracy: nor can you end this dispute by adopting the *qiblah* of anyone of them,

for all of them have different *qiblahs*; and, as a Prophet of Allah, you cannot make compromises on the principle of "give and take". Therefore the only thing you have to do is to stick to Our Commandments strictly and firmly. If you turn away from these, you will be transgressing the limits of Prophethood and showing ingratitude towards the favour of leadership with which We have blessed you."

148. This Arabic idiom is employed when one knows something with certainty and has absolutely no doubt about its identity. The metaphor has been derived from the fact that none can make any mistake in recognizing one's own children. Here it has been used to show that the learned people of the Jews and Christians knew it as a fact that the Ka'bah was built by the Prophet Abraham, just as they knew their own children. They also knew that the Holy Temple at Jerusalem was built by the Prophet Solomon some 1,300 years after the Ka'bah was built by the Prophet Abraham. The Ka'bah, therefore, had priority and superiority over the "Temple" and the Jews and the Christians should have no difficulty in recognizing and acknowledging it as the *qiblah* in the light of the above historical facts.

149. There is a subtle gap between the first sentence and the second, which has been left for the reader to fill. Everyone who wants to offer his Prayer must turn his face to one or the other direction. But the real thing that matters is not the direction of the face at prayer but those virtues which are to be gained by offering the prayer. Hence the thing that really matters is the spirit and real purpose of the Prayer and not any particular direction or place.

150. That is, "We have reiterated this Commandment lest anyone of you should turn his face to any other direction in the prayer and give to opponents cause to say, 'These people of the *ummat wasat* claim that they are witnesses of the Truth but their behaviour falsifies it. While they profess that the Commandment about the change of the *qiblah* has come from their Lord, they do not act upon it'."

151. The blessing refers to the blessing of leadership which Allah had wrested from the children of Israel and invested in the Muslims. This is the greatest reward which is given to any community when it adopts and follows the righteous way and is entrusted by Allah with the work of guiding the world on the path of virtue. Here Allah tells the Muslims, "The change of *qiblah* is symbolic of the change of leadership. You should, therefore, observe this Commandment strictly, lest leadership should be wrested from you on account of your disobedience or ingratitude. This favour will be conferred on you in perfection, if you obey the Commandment".

152. That is, "You should expect this blessing if you submit to this

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الْمُهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿١٥٨﴾ اِنَّ الصَّفَا وَ الْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَآئِرِ اللّٰهِ ۚ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ
اَوِ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ اَنْ يَّطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا ؕ وَ مَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا ۙ فَاِنَّ
اللّٰهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿١٥٩﴾ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَكْتُمُوْنَ مَآ اَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنٰتِ وَ الْهُدٰى
مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنّٰهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِى الْكِتٰبِ ۙ اُولٰٓئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ
اللّٰعِنُوْنَ ﴿١٦٠﴾ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ تَابُوْا وَ اَصْلَحُوْا وَ بَيَّنُوْا فَاُولٰٓئِكَ اَتُوْبُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ
وَ اَنَا التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿١٦١﴾ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَ مَاتُوْا وَ هُمْ كُفَّارٌ اُولٰٓئِكَ
عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ اللّٰهِ وَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ وَ النَّاسِ اَجْمَعِيْنَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ۚ لَا
يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَ لَا هُمْ يُنْظَرُوْنَ ﴿١٦٣﴾ وَ اِلٰهُكُمْ اِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ ۚ لَآ
اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمٰنُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿١٦٤﴾ اِنَّ فِىْ خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ وَ اخْتِلَافِ
الَّيْلِ وَ النَّهَارِ وَ الْفُلْكِ الَّتِىْ تَجْرِىْ فِى الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَ مَآ
اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مِنْ مَّآءٍ فَاَحْيَا بِهِ الْاَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَ بَثَّ
فِيْهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَآبَّةٍ ۖ وَّ تَصْرِيْفِ الرِّيٰحِ وَ السَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ
السَّمَآءِ وَ الْاَرْضِ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَّعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿١٦٥﴾ وَ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَّتَّخِذُ
مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ اَنْدَادًا يُّحِبُّوْنَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اَشَدُّ حُبًّا
لِّلّٰهِ ؕ وَ لَوْ يَرَى الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْٓا اِذْ يَرَوْنَ الْعَذَابَ ۙ اَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلّٰهِ جَمِيْعًا ۙ
وَّ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعَذَابِ ﴿١٦٦﴾ اِذْ تَبَرَّاَ الَّذِيْنَ اتُّبِعُوْا مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّبَعُوْا
وَ رَاَوُا الْعَذَابَ وَ تَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ الْاَسْبَابُ ﴿١٦٧﴾ وَ قَالَ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّبَعُوْا لَوْ
اَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَتَبَرَّاَ مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَبَرَّءُوْا مِنَّا ؕ كَذٰلِكَ يُرِيْهِمُ اللّٰهُ
اَعْمَالَهُمْ حَسَرٰتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ ؕ وَ مَا هُمْ بِخٰرِجِيْنَ مِنَ النَّارِ ﴿١٦٨﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا

Indeed Safa and Marwah are among the emblems of Allah: it is, therefore, no sin for him, who performs Hajj or 'Umrah[157] to the House of Allah, to run between the two hills;[158] and Allah knows and appreciates him who does any good with a willing heart.[159] 158

Indeed Allah curses, and the cursers, too, curse those who conceal the clear teachings and guidance We have sent down, after We have made these plain in the Book for the guidance of all mankind.[160] I, however, will forgive those of them who repent of it, mend their ways and make known what they were concealing: for I am very generous in accepting repentance and showing mercy. 159-160

Those who adopted the way of disbelief[161] and died as disbelievers, are accursed of Allah and of angels and of all mankind: they shall remain accursed for ever. Their punishment shall not be lightened, nor shall they be reprieved. 161-162

Your Deity is Allah alone: there is no deity save the All-Beneficent and All-Merciful Allah. (If they want a sign for the perception of this Reality) surely there are countless signs for those who use their common sense;[162] they can see alternation of the night and day, in the ships that sail the ocean laden with cargoes beneficial to mankind, and in the rain-water which Allah sends down from the sky and thereby gives life to the earth after its death and spreads over it all kinds of animate creatures, in the blowing of the winds and in the clouds which obediently wait for orders between the sky and the earth. (In spite of such clear signs of the Oneness of Allah), there are people who set up equals and rivals with Allah[163] and adore them with the adoration due to Allah — whereas the Believers adore Allah most ardently.[164] — Would that these transgressors could realize now what they will realize, when they will see the chastisement before them — that power and authority wholly belong to Allah and that Allah is severe in punishment! When He will inflict punishment, those very leaders and guides whom they followed in the world will disown them. But punishment they shall get and all their bonds shall be cut off. Then those who followed them will say, "Would that we were given another chance to return to the world: then we will disown them just as they have disowned us today."[165] Thus will Allah bring before them the deeds they did in the world in such a manner as to make them wring 163-167

their hands in regret but they shall be unable to come out of the Fire.

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Commandment about the change of the *qiblah*." This promise is very encouraging for a servant of Allah. The assurance gives him great consolation that he should expect such a great reward from his King, if he obeys His Commandments with all his heart and soul.

153. After their appointment to leadership, the Believers from hereon are given such instructions and directions as are essential for training and enabling them to discharge the duties of that position of responsibility. They are first of all warned that leadership is not a bed of roses but a bed of thorns. They will be confronted with difficulties, hardships, and trials at the very outset and will have to undergo untold sufferings and losses. But if they went through all those ordeals with fortitude and proceeded on in the way of Allah, they would be blessed with countless blessings and rewards by Him.

154. That is, "Fortitude and Prayer will generate in you the power which is required to bear that burden of responsibility with which you have been entrusted. Fortitude will give you that patience and courage under the afflictions, privations and temptations which you are bound to encounter and that moral strength and endurance which will be sorely needed in Allah's way, which is full of dangers. The Prayer will train you in discipline and other moral qualities which are essential for the right type of leadership."

155. It is forbidden to refer to those who are martyred for Allah's sake as "dead" because the very word "death" and its thought are very discouraging, and kill the spirit of self-sacrifice and the urge to fight in the way of Allah. Instead, the Muslims are told to believe that those who fall martyrs in the way of Allah in fact enjoy eternal life. And this is a reality which revitalises and keeps alive the spirit of courage and valour.

156. These words are to be uttered merely with the tongue, but we whould believe sincerely from the core of our hearts that "We belong to Allah and to none else." Thus, if anything is sacrificed in the way of Allah, it is spent rightly because it has gone to His service to Whom it really belonged."

"We shall certainly return to Him" :"We shall not live here for ever but shall have to leave this world one day. Thus, sooner or later we must die and go to Allah. It is, therefore, far better to fight in His way and lay down our lives for His sake than to pass our lives in self-seeking and self-worship and then die of some disease or accident."

157. Hajj is pilgrimage to the Ka'bah during the fixed days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah and 'Umrah is the voluntary visit to the Ka'bah in other than the Hajj days.

Directions about Hajj and 'Umrah are being given at this place because the Ka'bah had recently been made the *qiblah* and naturally questions and problems connected with it had arisen.

158. The running between Safa and Marwah (the two hills) near the Ka'bah was one of the rituals taught by Allah to Abraham in connection with Hajj. But afterwards when the people began to associate false gods with Allah, they built temples on Safa and Marwah and dedicated these to two idols, Asāf and Nā'ilah, and went round them in reverence to them. When the Arabs embraced Islām, a question arose whether running between Safa and Marwah was one of the original rituals of Hajj or whether this had been invented by the worshippers of false gods and whether they would not be guilty of practising *shirk* by running between the two hills.

Besides this, a Tradition related by Ḥaḍrat 'A'ishah says that the people of Madinah had an old aversion to running between Safa and Marwah even before they accepted Islām for they were devotees of Manāt and did not worship Asāf and Nā'ilah. Therefore, now when the Ka'bah was made the *qiblah*, Allah removed their misunderstanding concerning the running between Safa and Marwah and told them that this ritual had really been connected with Hajj ever since the time of the Prophet Abraham and was not the invention of the ignorant people after him.

159. That is, it is far better to run between the two hills with a willing heart to please Allah than as a mere compliance with a Command from Him.

160. The greatest crime of the Jewish scholars was that they had made the teachings of their Scriptures the monopoly of their rabbis and professional scribes. Not to speak of imparting these to the Gentiles, they did not teach them even to the common Jews. As a result, the Jews began to practise irreligious things because of their ignorance. Even then their rabbis did not do anything to reform and educate them. Instead of this, they went on, directly or indiretly, certifying every irreligious practice as legal merely for the sake of winning and retaining popularity. The Muslims are being forewarned that as leaders of the world they should propagate and spread the Guidance given to them and should not keep it back from the common people as the Jewish rabbis and scribes did.

161. The literal meaning of the word *kufr* is "to conceal". By and by it came to be used for the concealment of the Truth and then for its rejection, as the antonym of *Iman*. *Iman* means to believe, to accept and to admit, and *kufr* means

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النَّاسُ كُلُوْا مِمَّا فِي الْاَرْضِ حَلٰلًا طَيِّبًا ۖ وَّ لَا تَتَّبِعُوْا خُطُوٰتِ الشَّيْطٰنِ
إِنَّهٗ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿168﴾ إِنَّمَا يَاْمُرُكُمْ بِالسُّوْٓءِ وَ الْفَحْشَآءِ وَ اَنْ تَقُوْلُوْا
عَلَى اللّٰهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿169﴾ وَ إِذَا قِيْلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوْا مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ قَالُوْا
بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَآ اَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ اٰبَآءَنَا ۭ اَوَ لَوْ كَانَ اٰبَآؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُوْنَ
شَيْـًٔا وَّ لَا يَهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿170﴾ وَ مَثَلُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِيْ يَنْعِقُ بِمَا
لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَآءً وَّ نِدَآءً ۭ صُمٌّۢ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿171﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا
الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُلُوْا مِنْ طَيِّبٰتِ مَا رَزَقْنٰكُمْ وَ اشْكُرُوْا لِلّٰهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُوْنَ ﴿172﴾ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَ الدَّمَ وَ لَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيْرِ وَ
مَآ اُهِلَّ بِهٖ لِغَيْرِ اللّٰهِ ۚ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَّ لَا عَادٍ فَلَآ إِثْمَ
عَلَيْهِ ۭ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿173﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَكْتُمُوْنَ مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ مِنَ
الْكِتٰبِ وَ يَشْتَرُوْنَ بِهٖ ثَمَنًا قَلِيْلًا ۙ اُولٰٓئِكَ مَا يَاْكُلُوْنَ فِيْ بُطُوْنِهِمْ إِلَّا
النَّارَ وَ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللّٰهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ وَ لَا يُزَكِّيْهِمْ ۚ وَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
اَلِيْمٌ ﴿174﴾ اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلٰلَةَ بِالْهُدٰى وَ الْعَذَابَ بِالْمَغْفِرَةِ ۚ
فَمَآ اَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ ﴿175﴾ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّ اللّٰهَ نَزَّلَ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ ۭ وَ إِنَّ
الَّذِيْنَ اخْتَلَفُوْا فِي الْكِتٰبِ لَفِيْ شِقَاقٍۭ بَعِيْدٍ ﴿176﴾ لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ اَنْ
تُوَلُّوْا وُجُوْهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَ الْمَغْرِبِ وَ لٰكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ اٰمَنَ
بِاللّٰهِ وَ الْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ وَ الْكِتٰبِ وَ النَّبِيّٖنَ ۚ وَ اٰتَى الْمَالَ
عَلٰى حُبِّهٖ ذَوِي الْقُرْبٰى وَ الْيَتٰمٰى وَ الْمَسٰكِيْنَ وَ ابْنَ السَّبِيْلِ ۙ وَ
السَّآئِلِيْنَ وَ فِي الرِّقَابِ ۚ وَ اَقَامَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَ اٰتَى الزَّكٰوةَ ۚ وَ الْمُوْفُوْنَ

O people, eat of what is lawful and clean in the earth and do not follow the ways of Satan,[166] for he is your avowed enemy. He enjoins you to commit vice and indecency and induces you to attribute to Allah's name things you do not know to be from Him.[167] 168-169

When it is said to them, "Follow the Commands that Allah has sent down," they reply, "We will follow only what we found our forefathers practising."[168] Well, will they go on following their forefathers even though they did not use common sense and did not find the right way? The mental condition of those who rejected the way of Allah may be likened to that of the cattle whom the shepherd calls but they hear nothing except the sound of shouts and cries.[169] They are deaf, they are dumb, they are blind; therefore they do not understand anything. 170-171

O Believers, if you are true worshippers of Allah alone, eat without hesitation of the good and clean things wherewith We have provided you and be grateful to Allah.[170] Allah has only forbidden you to eat what dies of itself, and blood and swine flesh and what has been consecrated to any other name than of Allah.[171] But one will incur no sin if, forced by absolute necessity, he eats of any of these forbidden things, provided he has no intention of transgressing the law and does not take more than what is absolutely indispensable: for Allah is very Forgiving and very Merciful.[172] 172-173

Indeed those, who conceal the Commands that Allah has sent down in His Book and barter them away for paltry worldly gains, fill their bellies with fire.[173] Allah will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He regard them as pure;[174] there is a painful torment for them. They are the people who have bartered away Guidance for error and Allah's pardon for His punishment. How audacious they are: they are ready even to endure the fire of Hell. This was inspite of the fact that Allah had sent down the Book with the Truth but the people who sought differences in the Book swerved far away from the Truth in their disputes. 174-176

It is no virtue that you turn your faces towards the east or the west,[175] but virtue is that one should sincerely believe in Allah and the Last Day and the Angels and the Book and the Prophets and, out of His love, spend of one's choice wealth for relatives and orphans, for the 177

needy and the wayfarer, for beggars and for the ransom of slaves, and establish the *Salāt* and pay the *Zakat*. And the virtuous are those who keep their pledges when they make them and show fortitude in hardships and adversity and in the struggle between the Truth and falsehood; such are the truthful people and such are the pious.

Contd. from p. 125]

to disbelieve, to reject and to oppose. According to the Qur'ān, one shall be guilty of *kufr*:

(1) If one does not believe in Allah at all or refuses to accept Him as the Supreme Authority or as one's Master and that of the entire Universe or as the only God of worship, or

(2) If one professes to acknowledge Allah but refuses to accept His Commandments and Guidance as the sole source of the knowledge of Truth and of Law, or

(3) If one accepts on principle the Guidance of Allah, but refuses to accept the authority of the Messengers whom Allah has sent with His Commandments and Guidance, or

(4) If one accepts a particular Messenger (or Messengers) and rejects others according to one's whim or prejudices, or

(5) If one discards the whole or any part of the Islāmic creed, or its code of life, or the teachings of the Messenger, or

(6) If one accepts all these things in theory but discards the Commandments of God deliberately in practice and persists in this conduct and leads a life of rebellion instead of submission.

All the above modes of thought and action are rebellion against Allah and are *kufr* according to the Qur'ān. Besides the above usages, the Qur'ān sometimes uses the word *kufr* in the sense of ingratitude as an antonym of *shukr*. *Shukr* means that one should be grateful only to Him Who has bestowed the blessing, should appreciate His favour, should use and spend the blessing only according to His Will, and should submit to Him completely and faithfully like a loyal servant. On the contrary, *kufr* or ingratitude is that one should either refuse to acknowledge the favour of one's benefactor, and should regard it as a result of one's own ability, or as a favour and result of the influence of another one, or should depreciate the blessing bestowed by Him and waste it, or should use the blessing against His Will, or should adopt an attitude of rebellion against Him inspite of His favours and blessings. Such an attitude of *kufr* is generally described as ingratitude, disloyalty, rebellion and treason.

162. Anyone who does not look around like an animal but makes an intelligent observation of the great system of the universe that is working day and night before his very eyes, and is not blinded by prejudice or obduracy, can see many a sign pointing to the Reality. He will certainly see that it is being ruled only by the All-Powerful, All-Wise Sovereign. He can also understand that Allah alone is the God of the whole universe and that there is absolutely no room for any kind of interference or partnership, for no one else has any quality or power or authority to entitle him to the claim of Godhead.

163. "They set up equals.....": they ascribe some of the exclusive qualities and powers of Allah to others and render all or some of His exclusive rights to false gods. For instance, though Allah alone has control over all the forces of nature and has the power to fulfil all the needs of His creatures and to hear their prayers and requests, and although He alone knows all that is open or hidden, yet they invoke others for help or attribute all or some of these powers and qualities to others than Allah and thus set up compeers to rank with Him.

Again it is the exclusive right of Allah that His subjects should acknowledge Him as the Supreme Authority, bow down their heads before Him and fear Him alone in open and secret. But as they render all or some rights to others than Allah, they set up compeers with Him. Then, Allah alone is entitled to prescribe what is lawful and what is unlawful, what is clean and what is unclean. He alone has the authority to define the rights and duties of His subjects, lay down commands and prohibitions for them, etc. Therefore those who arrogate to themselves any of these rights shall be guilty of *shirk*. Again, He alone deserves to be acknowledged as the Sovereign and, as His subjects, the people should consider His Commandments to be final and turn to Him for guidance; therefore those who ascribe any of these rights to others than Allah, set up compeers with Him; likewise those institutions or persons who claim to possess any of these qualities or rights or assume to themselves any of these qualities or rights or demand that others should accede these to them, set themselves as compeers with Allah, whether or not they put forward formal claims to Godhead.

164. Belief in Allah demands that one should prefer His Will to one's own will or to that of others, and cherish His love so dearly as to be ready to sacrifice all other affections for its sake.

165. This helpless end of the ring-leaders and misguiders and their followers has been specially mentioned here to warn the Muslims to be very careful in selecting and electing their leaders and guides. The former communities went astray because they followed wrong leaders and evil guides. The Muslims should, therefore, learn a lesson from their end and discriminate between leaders and misleaders and should not follow the latter.

166. They have been told to break all those restrictions which superstition and ignorance had imposed upon articles of food and drink.

167. That is, "Satan makes people believe that these superstitious customs and restrictions upon food and drink are a part of religion and have been enjoined by Allah, although there is no authority to show that they are from Him."

168. The only authority they have for their superstitious practices is that these have been the customs of their forefathers, and the foolish followers consider this a good authority.

169. This parable has two aspects:

(1) That these people are like those herds of cattle which merely hear the call and cry of the drovers and move about at the sound of their call without understanding the meaning of their words.

(2) That preaching before them is like preaching to the cattle which only hear the sounds but do not comprehend the meaning and the implication of the words that are spoken to them. The words used are comprehensive and cover both the aspects.

170. The Believers are enjoined to break all sorts of unnecessary, improper and unlawful restrictions imposed by the pundits, the priests, the rabbis, the clergies, the forefathers, etc.

For if they really believe in Allah, as they profess, they should abstain from eating only what Allah has forbidden and eat, without any hesitation, only what Allah has declared lawful.

According to a Tradition of the Holy Prophet, "One who offers the *Salāt* in the way we offer, turns his face towards the *qiblah* to which we turn our face, and eats what we have slaughtered, is a Muslim." Therefore if one has any scruples regarding the eating of those things which Allah has declared lawful, he has not as yet become a true Muslim, even if he offers the *Salāt*, turning his face towards the Ka'bah. He should give up the prejudices and superstitions of ignorance if he really and sincerely has become a Muslim. For the very observance of old traditions and customs is a proof that he is still imbued with the poison of ignorance.

171. This applies both to the flesh of the animal which is slaughtered in the name of any other than Allah and to the food which is offered as a vow to any other than Allah. As a matter of fact, everything whether animal, corn, or another eatable, actually belongs to Allah and is given by Him; therefore it should be offered as charity, or as vow, only in His name as a mark of gratitude to Him. If it is offered in any other name it means that one regards it also, instead of Allah, or along with Allah, as supreme, and the bestower of favours and blessings.

172. In this verse, permission for the use of an unclean thing has been given on three conditions: (1) It must be really a case of extremity. For instance, if one is dying of hunger or thirst or if one's life is in danger because of some disease and there is nothing available except an unclean thing, one is permitted to take it. (2) One should not cherish any desire in one's heart to break the law of Allah. (3) One should not take even a bit more than what is absolutely necessary. For example, if in a certain case, a few bits or drops of an unclean thing can save life, then nothing more than this absolute minimum should be taken.

173. These were their learned people, who, in spite of possessing the knowledge of the Divine Book, kept it back from the common people, and were responsible for all the superstitions, false customs and unnecessary restrictions which were prevalent among them and which gave birth to new codes of law. Besides this, they were also guilty of another crime. They did not utter a word against the evil practices which began to spread as a result of that ignorance which had been deliberately created among them. Not only this: the majority of them considered this sorry condition to be advantageous to themselves and so let the Commandments of Allah remain hidden from the people.

174. Here the false claims and misrepresentations of the so-called "spiritual leaders" and "saints." have been refuted. By every possible device they try to impress upon the common people that they are very pious and holy, and the common people also believe them to be so. They presume and their followers believe that they will secure pardon for them by their intercession with Allah on their behalf. Allah warns that He will neither speak to these "spiritual leaders" nor consider them pious and holy, not to speak of granting them the authority of intercession.

175. In order to show the futility of excessive emphasis on external religious forms, it has been pointed out, as an instance, that there is no real virtue in the mere act of turning faces to the east or to the west in prayer. For the mere performance of some religious rites or formalities or show of piety is not real virtue which may have any importance or value with Allah.

بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عٰهَدُوْا ۚ وَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ فِي الْبَأْسَآءِ وَ الضَّرَّآءِ وَ حِيْنَ
الْبَأْسِ ۗ أُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ صَدَقُوْا ۗ وَ أُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُوْنَ ﴿177﴾ يٰٓأَيُّهَا
الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلَى ۗ اَلْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَ الْعَبْدُ
بِالْعَبْدِ وَ الْأُنْثٰى بِالْأُنْثٰى ۚ فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهٗ مِنْ أَخِيْهِ شَيْءٌ فَاتِّبَاعٌ
بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَ أَدَآءٌ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ ۗ ذٰلِكَ تَخْفِيْفٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَ رَحْمَةٌ ۗ
فَمَنِ اعْتَدٰى بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ فَلَهٗ عَذَابٌ أَلِيْمٌ ﴿178﴾ وَ لَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ
حَيٰوةٌ يّٰٓأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿179﴾ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ
الْمَوْتُ إِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرَا ۖ الْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَ الْأَقْرَبِيْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ ۚ حَقًّا
عَلَى الْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿180﴾ فَمَنْ بَدَّلَهٗ بَعْدَ مَا سَمِعَهٗ فَإِنَّمَآ إِثْمُهٗ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ
يُبَدِّلُوْنَهٗ ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿181﴾ فَمَنْ خَافَ مِنْ مُّوْصٍ جَنَفًا أَوْ
إِثْمًا فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلَآ إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿182﴾ يٰٓأَيُّهَا
الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿183﴾ أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُوْدٰتٍ ۚ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيْضًا أَوْ عَلٰى سَفَرٍ
فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ وَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ يُطِيْقُوْنَهٗ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِيْنٍ ۗ
فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهٗ ۗ وَ أَنْ تَصُوْمُوْا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿184﴾ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِيْٓ أُنْزِلَ فِيْهِ الْقُرْاٰنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ
وَ بَيِّنٰتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدٰى وَ الْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۗ
وَ مَنْ كَانَ مَرِيْضًا أَوْ عَلٰى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ يُرِيْدُ اللّٰهُ بِكُمُ
الْيُسْرَ وَ لَا يُرِيْدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ ۚ وَ لِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَ لِتُكَبِّرُوا اللّٰهَ عَلٰى مَا

O Believers, the law[176] of retribution has been prescribed for you in cases of murder; if a free man commits a murder, the free man shall be punished for it and a slave for a slave : likewise if a woman is guilty of murder the same shall be accountable for it.[177] But in case the injured brother[178] is willing to show leniency to the murderer, the blood money should be decided in accordance with the common law[179] and the murderer should pay it in a genuine way. This is an allowance and mercy from your Lord. Now there shall be a painful torment for anyone who transgresses the limits after this.[180] O men of understanding, there is security of life for you in the law of retribution.[181] It is expected that you will refrain from breaking this law. 178-179

It has been prescribed for you that when death approaches one of you and he is leaving some property behind him, he should bequeath it equitably for his parents and relatives : it is an obligation on those who fear Allah.[182] Then if those, who heard the will, change it, they themselves shall bear the sin of this. Allah hears everything and knows everything. If, however, one apprehends genuinely that the testator had (intentionally or unintentionally) done some injustice, and then alters the will to set things right between the parties concerned, in that case he does not incur any sin. Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. 180-182

O Believers, the Fast has been made obligatory on you just as it was prescribed for the followers of the Prophets before you. It is expected that this will produce piety in you.[183] The Fast is to be observed for a fixed number of days. If, however, anyone of you be sick or on a journey, he should fast the same number of other days. As for those who can fast (but do not), the expiation of this shall be the feeding of one needy person for one fast day, and whoso does more than this[184] with a willing heart does it for his own good. But if you understand the thing, it is better for you to observe the Fast.[185] 183-184

Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'ān was sent down : this Book is a perfect guidance for mankind and consists of clear teachings which show the right way and are a criterion of Truth and falsehood. Therefore from now on whoever witnesses it, it is obligatory on him to fast the whole month, but if one be ill or on a journey, he should make up for the same number by fasting on other days.[186] Allah desires to show leniency to you and does not desire to show any hardship. Therefore this method is being shown to you so that you may complete 185

the number of Fast days and glorify Allah for the Guidance He has shown to you and be grateful to Him.[187]

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176. The Arabic word "*qisas*" stands for the return of life for life in cases of murder. It does not, however, mean that the murderer should be killed in the same manner in which he committed the murder. It only means that his life should be taken as he took the life of the other.

177. The principle of the equality of the value of human life has been prescribed here in order to meet the strictest claims of justice. The value of blood and consequently retribution for it are not to be determined by the rank of the slain or that of the murderer. It has, therefore, been clearly laid down that the murderer himself shall be made to pay for the blood.

Before the advent of Islām, they put a higher value on the blood of a member of their own clan and demanded the life of a man of the same rank from the clan of the murderer or the lives of scores or even hundreds from the tribe of the murderer according to the value put on the blood of the slain. On the other hand, if the murderer happened to belong to a higher rank than that of the slain, their "judgement" was that the life of the murderer should not be taken for the life of the slain. And this inequality in the evaluation of blood was not confined only to that age of ignorance. Even today the "civilised" nations are not ashamed of declaring openly that if one person of their nation is killed, they will take the lives of fifty men from the nation of the murderer. And they put these challenges into practice. We often hear that so many people belonging to the subject nation have been put to death to avenge the murder of one person belonging to the ruling nation. But if the murderer belonged to a "civilised" ruling nation and the slain to an "uncivilised" subject nation, their judges would not pass the sentence of death on him. In order to guard against these unjust rules, Allah has ordained that the life of the murderer and the murderer alone should be taken for the life of the slain, irrespective of the rank or race of the murderer or that of the slain.

178. The use of the word "brother" here contains a kind of recommendation. That is, "Though the murderer has injured you very grievously, he is after all your brother by the human relation. Therefore, if you restrain your rage against your erring brother and refrain from retaliation and remit the penalty of death, you will raise your standard of humanity."

This verse also shows that, according to the Islāmic Penal Code, even murder is a compoundable offence. The heirs of the murdered person have the right to pardon the murderer, if they deem it proper. In that case the court cannot insist on taking his life. Of course, the murderer will have to pay the blood money if the rightful claimants demand it.

179. The word "*ma'ruf*" has been used in many places in the Qur'ān. It refers to those just and rational rules of conduct which are generally known and accepted by all fair-minded people. They are so clear and well known that everyone who is not blinded by self-interest and prejudice will acknowledge them as right and just, and the Islāmic law recognizes them in all those matters for which it has not laid down any regulations. Such common laws and general usages are termed "*ma'ruf*".

180. For instance, it will be transgression if the heirs of the slain try to retaliate even after accepting the ransom, or if the murderer does not mean to pay the ransom gracefully, or otherwise reacts in an ungrateful manner.

181. This verse refutes the opinion of those people who go to the other extreme and advocate total abolition of capital punishment. If it is inhuman to insist on retaliation, it is equally inhuman to encourage murder by totally abolishing capital punishment, as has been done in some "civilised" countries. That is why Allah declares that there is life for society in the law of retribution. If a society does not pay due regard to the sanctity of life and tries to protect a murderer, it sets a premium on crime and puts in danger the lives of many innocent people.

182. This commandment about making a will for the distribution of property was given at a time when the law of inheritance had not yet been prescribed. Its object was to safeguard the rights of the lawful heirs against injustice. Afterwards when Allah Himself prescribed a law for the distribution of inheritance (as laid down in Sūrah An-Nisa below), the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) enjoined the following two rules in explanation of the commandments concerning the making of will and distribution of inheritance:

183. Islām proceeded step by step and by degrees in the imposition of its obligatory duties. The same was done in the case of the Fast. At first the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) advised the Muslims to observe fasts only for three days in a month but this was not obligatory. Then in the second year of the Hijrah, this Command (v. 183) about fasting in the month of Ramadan was revealed. This, however, left an option for those who were able to fast but did not. They were required to feed one poor man as an expiation of one day's fast (v. 184). Then, later, the final commandment contained in the next verse (185) modified this, and the concession for able-bodied people was withdrawn, but retained for a sick person or wayfarer and by analogy for a pregnant or a suckling woman and for those old people who were not able to fast.

In a lengthy statement quoted by Imām Ahmad bin Hanbal, Hadrat Mu'āz bin Jabal says: "The Salāt and the Fast took their present form gradually. At first

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هَدٰىكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿١٨٥﴾ وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِيْ عَنِّيْ فَإِنِّيْ قَرِيْبٌ ۖ
أُجِيْبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۙ فَلْيَسْتَجِيْبُوْا لِيْ وَلْيُؤْمِنُوْا بِيْ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَرْشُدُوْنَ ﴿١٨٦﴾ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلٰى نِسَآئِكُمْ ۖ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ
لَّكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُنَّ ۖ عَلِمَ اللّٰهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ
عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ ۖ فَالْئٰنَ بَاشِرُوْهُنَّ وَابْتَغُوْا مَا كَتَبَ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَ
كُلُوْا وَاشْرَبُوْا حَتّٰى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ
مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ۖ ثُمَّ أَتِمُّوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى الَّيْلِ ۚ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوْهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ
عٰكِفُوْنَ ۙ فِي الْمَسٰجِدِ ۗ تِلْكَ حُدُوْدُ اللّٰهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوْهَا ۗ كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ
اٰيٰتِهٖ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿١٨٧﴾ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوْٓا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ
وَتُدْلُوْا بِهَآ إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوْا فَرِيْقًا مِّنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَ
أَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿١٨٨﴾ يَسْئَلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الْأَهِلَّةِ ۖ قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيْتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَ
الْحَجِّ ۗ وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوْتَ مِنْ ظُهُوْرِهَا وَلٰكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنِ
اتَّقٰى ۚ وَأْتُوا الْبُيُوْتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿١٨٩﴾
وَقَاتِلُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ الَّذِيْنَ يُقَاتِلُوْنَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوْا ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا
يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِيْنَ ﴿١٩٠﴾ وَاقْتُلُوْهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوْهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوْهُمْ مِّنْ
حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوْكُمْ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ ۚ وَلَا تُقٰتِلُوْهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ
الْحَرَامِ حَتّٰى يُقٰتِلُوْكُمْ فِيْهِ ۚ فَإِنْ قٰتَلُوْكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوْهُمْ ۗ كَذٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ
الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿١٩١﴾ فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿١٩٢﴾ وَقٰتِلُوْهُمْ حَتّٰى
لَا تَكُوْنَ فِتْنَةٌ وَّيَكُوْنَ الدِّيْنُ لِلّٰهِ ۚ فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَلَا عُدْوَانَ إِلَّا عَلَى

And if My servants ask you, O Prophet, concerning Me, tell them that I am quite near to them. I hear and answer the prayer of the suppliant, when he calls to Me. So let them respond to My call and believe in Me.[188] Convey this to them, O Prophet; perhaps they may be guided aright.[189] 186

It has been made lawful for you to go to your wives during the nights of the fast days. They are as a garment to you and you are as a garment to them.[190] Though Allah knew that you were secretly dishonest to yourselves, He has pardoned your guilt and forgiven you. Now you are permitted to have intercourse with your wives and enjoy what Allah has made lawful for you.[191] You are also permitted to eat and drink during the nights of the Fast months,[192] until you can discern the white streak of dawn from the blackness of night.[193] Then (abstain from all these things and) complete your Fast till night-fall.[194] But you should not have intercourse with your wives while you confine yourselves to mosques.[195] These are the bounds set by Allah; so do not go near them.[196] In this way Allah makes His Commands clear to mankind. It is expected that they will guard themselves against wrong ways. 187

Do not usurp one another's property by unjust means nor offer it to the judges so that you may devour knowingly and unjustly a portion of the goods of others.[197] 188

They ask you about the phases of the moon. Say, "These are signs for the people to reckon dates and fix the periods for Hajj."[198] Also tell them, "It is no virtue to enter your houses from their backs (during the Hajj days); real virtue is that one should refrain from incurring the displeasure of Allah; so enter your houses by their proper doors, and fear Allah so that you may gain (true) success."[199] 189

And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight against you[200] but do not commit aggression because Allah does not like aggressors.[201] Fight against them wherever they confront you in combat and drive them out from where they drove you out. Though killing is bad, persecution is worse than killing.[202] Do not fight against them near the Masjid Haram unless they attack you there. And if they attack you first (even in that sacred area), strike them (without any hesitation); this is the due punishment for such disbelievers. If, however, they desist 190-192

from fighting (you should also do likewise), and know that Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.[203]

Contd. from p.135]

the Muslims faced Jerusalem during the Salāt but after some years they were commanded to turn their faces towards the Ka'abah, Makkah. Besides this, at first they used to inform one another about the time of each Salāt but afterwards the same was proclaimed by means of Azān (the call for prayer). (As to the Fast), when the Holy Prophet migrated to Al-Madinah, he observed fasts for three days in a month and also on the tenth of Muharram. Then Allah made it obligatory to fast during the whole month of Ramadān but allowed the feeding of one person as an expiation for one who did not observe fasts, though he could. Afterwards this concession of feeding one person for one day of fast was cancelled in the case of healthy persons and the one not on a journey (*Ibn Kathir*, p.214).

Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd and other scholars have also quoted Traditions from Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah, 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, and 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud to the same effect. In support of the same, Ibn Jarir Tabarī, a famous commentator of the Qur'ān, has quoted Traditions citing the authority in full from several Companions and their followers. In one of these Traditions, he quotes the following explanation of Ḥaḍrat Mu'āz bin Jabal: "As the Arabs were not used to fasting, it was hard for them at first to observe fasts. They were, therefore, given the option to feed one poor person on the day they did not observe fast during the month of Ramadān. Afterwards a Commandment was revealed, cancelling this concession except in the case of a sick person or one on a journey". He quotes another tradition from Ibn 'Abbās to this effect. In the first Commandment (v.184), Allah had allowed expiation for fasts even for an able-bodied person who could fast but did not. In verse 185 which was revealed next year, the concession for an able-bodied person was cancelled but was retained for a sick person or a wayfarer.

184. More than this": to feed more than one person for each fasting day, or to feed one as well as observe the fast..

185. The first commandment about fasting contained in vv. 183-84 was revealed in the second year of Hijrah before the battle of Badr. The subsequent verses were revealed a year later but were inserted here because they dealt with the same matter.

186. It has been left to the option of the individual to observe or not to observe fasts during a journey. Some of the Comapanions of the Holy Prophet observed fasts and some did not when they were on a journey with him and neither raised any objection against the other. The Holy Prophet himself sometimes

observed fasts on a journey and sometimes did not. Once he saw people gathered round a man who had fallen to the ground and asked what was the matter with him. He was told that he had become too weak to stand on account of observing fasts; he remarked that it was no virtue to observe fasts in such a condition.

During war time, he used to issue orders for postponing the fasts. Hadrat 'Umar has related that they did not observe fasts twice during the month of Ramadan when they went to war under the command of the Holy Prophet: on the occasion of the battle of Badr and at the conquest of Makkah. Ibn 'Umar says that on the eve of the conquest of Makkah, the Holy Prophet declared, "As we are going to fight our enemy you should postpone your fasts so that you may conserve your strength to fight."

There is no clear injunction from the Holy Prophet for the prescription of a minimum standard of distance for postponing the fasts. His Companions also differed in practice with regard to the standard. But it is obvious that the fast may be postponed for that distance which is commonly understood to be a journey and in which one begins to feel being on a journey.

There is a difference of opinion as to whether the people of a city, which is attacked by an enemy, can postpone the fast for the sake of Jihad, inspite of being the residents. Some scholars do not allow this. But Imam Ibn Taimiyyah has maintained with strong arguments that postponement of the fast under such circumstances is permissible.

187. Allah is so bountiful that He does not want to deprive His servants of the blessings of fasting. Therefore He has not confined it to the month of Ramadan but has opened another way for its completion for those who fail to complete it during this month for genuine reasons. They should make up the deficiency by observing fast on other days in order to show their gratitude for the revelation of the Qur'ān during the month of Ramadan.

It is clear from this verse that fasting in Ramadan has been prescribed not only as a form of worship and a training for piety, but also to show gratitude for the great blessing of the Revelation of the Qur'ān during the month of Ramadan. And the best way to show gratitude for a favour is to fulfil the object for which it was bestowed and to prepare oneself for its completion as best as one can. The object for which Allah has bestowed the Qur'ān upon us is to reveal His Will so that we may fulfil it ourselves and persuade others to do the same. Fasting provides the best training for the fulfilment of this object and is both a devotion and a sign of gratitude for the favour shown in the form of the Qur'ān.

188. That is, "Although you cannot see Me nor perceive Me with your senses, yet you must never imagine that I am far from you. Nay, I am so near to

every servant of Mine that he can invoke Me and place his request before Me wherever he is. So much so that I hear and answer even those requests which are not expressed in words but are made only in the innermost heart. As to the false and impotent gods you have created in your ignorance and folly, you have to travel to them, and even then they do not hear and answer you. But here am I, the Sovereign, the absolute Ruler of the boundless universe and Possessor of all powers and authority, so near to hear and answer you that you need no recommendation of intercession for making any request anywhere at any time you like. Therefore you should free yourselves from the folly of running from door to door after false gods, and accept My invitation and turn to Me and trust in Me and submit to Me and become My servants."

189. That is, "They may learn this truth from you and adopt the right attitude, in which lies their own good."

190. That is, just as nothing can intervene between the clothes and the body and each fits into the other naturally, so is the relation between the husband and the wife: each is a means of comfort, protection and happiness for the other.

191. Although at first there was no clear injunction forbidding intercourse between husband and wife during the nights of Ramadan, yet the Muslims had a vague notion that it was not lawful to do so and it was with a guilty conscience that sometimes some of them went to bed with their wives. There was thus a danger of developing a criminal and sinful mental attitude. Therefore, Allah first warned them of their dishonest behaviour towards their conscience and then made it lawful so that they might do it with a clear conscience.

192. There was also a misunderstanding about the timings of eating and drinking during Ramadan. Some people were of the opinion that eating and drinking was prohibited after the 'Isha' (night) Prayer up to sunset of the next day. Others thought that one was permitted to eat and drink as long as one kept awake after the 'Isha' Prayer, but could not do so after one had fallen asleep; they were often put to great inconvenience on account of these notions of their own creation. In this verse their misunderstandings were removed and the duration of the period of fasting was fixed from the dawn of the morning to the sunset, and eating and drinking and intercourse with wives were permitted from sunset to dawn. Besides, the Holy Prophet instructed that a meal should be taken before the dawn (of morning) as a preparation for fasting.

193. Islām has set a standard of time for its practices which can be applied universally by people at every stage of civilization and in every part of the globe. That is why it does not fix the boundary lines of its religious practices by watches and clocks but by clear signs in the sky. This is a standard which can suit the

people of every age and country, and can be set by watches between these prescribed bounds to suit their circumstances and convenience. But those people who do not understand its philosophy raise foolish objections. For example, they say that this standard cannot work near the Poles, because there the duration of the day and the night is of many months. They forget that even in the polar regions, the signs of morning and evening and mid-night appear as regularly as in other places and the inhabitants regulate the timings of work, play, sleep, etc., in accordance with the appearance of these signs. When there were no watches and clocks, the inhabitants of the Arctic Circle fixed their timings by these signs. Thus when these signs can help them to fix the timings in other matters of life, they can also serve them to fix the timings of the Prayer and of the commencement and end of the Fast.

194. "Complete your fast till nightfall" means: "Your fast ends where the boundary of the night begins." It is obvious that the boundary line of the night begins at sunset: therefore the fast should be broken at the time of sunset for which we should look at the eastern horizon. If we see the darkness of the night rising up there, it is a signal for the breaking of the fast. In the same way, the rising of the white streak of the morning in the eastern horizon is a signal for the beginning of the fast.

It must be clearly understood that in the Islāmic Code of Law there are no hard and fast limits, exact to the second or minute, for the duration of the fast. There is great latitude in both the limits. Differences of a minute or a second either way do not make the fast defective. The fast becomes complete as soon as the darkness of night begins to rise in the east. It should, therefore, be broken at sunset. In the same way, when the dawn of the morning appears in the eastern horizon, the boundary line begins for observing the fast and eating and drinking, should be stopped. But here, too, there is an allowance for one to finish ones meal even though the dawn of the morning might have appeared, if one could not wake up in time for it. There is a Tradition of the Holy Prophet to this effect: "If one, while taking his meals, hears the call for the morning Prayer (or the sound of the siren as in our age) for beginning the fast, one should not withdraw one's hand immediately from food, but should finish the meal." Likewise, one is enjoined to break the fast without delay as soon as the dark line of the night appears in the east.

195. *I'tikaf* is a special voluntary practice of devotion during the last ten days of the month of Ramadan. One confines oneself to a mosque and devotes one's whole time to prayer and meditation in addition to the prescribed obligatory religious duties. One is required to abstain from all worldly pursuits, desires, lusts, etc., and is not to leave the mosque except to attend to the call of nature etc.

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الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿١٩٣﴾ اَلشَّهْرُ الْحَرَامُ بِالشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْحُرُمٰتُ قِصَاصٌ ؕ فَمَنِ
اعْتَدٰى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوْا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدٰى عَلَيْكُمْ ۪ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ
وَاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿١٩٤﴾ وَاَنْفِقُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوْا
بِاَيْدِيْكُمْ اِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ ۛ وَاَحْسِنُوْا ۛ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿١٩٥﴾ وَ ع
اَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلّٰهِ ؕ فَاِنْ اُحْصِرْتُمْ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۚ وَ
لَا تَحْلِقُوْا رُءُوْسَكُمْ حَتّٰى يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ مَحِلَّهٗ ؕ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيْضًا
اَوْ بِهٖٓ اَذًى مِّنْ رَّاْسِهٖ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِّنْ صِيَامٍ اَوْ صَدَقَةٍ اَوْ نُسُكٍ ۚ فَاِذَآ
اَمِنْتُمْ ۪ فَمَنْ تَمَتَّعَ بِالْعُمْرَةِ اِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۚ فَمَنْ
لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلٰثَةِ اَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ اِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ ؕ تِلْكَ عَشَرَةٌ
كَامِلَةٌ ؕ ذٰلِكَ لِمَنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ اَهْلُهٗ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ؕ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ
وَاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿١٩٦﴾ اَلْحَجُّ اَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُوْمٰتٌ ۚ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ
فِيْهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوْقَ ۙ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ ؕ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوْا
مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَّعْلَمْهُ اللّٰهُ ؕ وَتَزَوَّدُوْا فَاِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوٰى ۫ وَاتَّقُوْنِ
يٰٓاُولِي الْاَلْبَابِ ﴿١٩٧﴾ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ اَنْ تَبْتَغُوْا فَضْلًا مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ؕ فَاِذَآ
اَفَضْتُمْ مِّنْ عَرَفٰتٍ فَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ ۪ وَاذْكُرُوْهُ كَمَا
هَدٰىكُمْ ۚ وَاِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلِهٖ لَمِنَ الضَّآلِّيْنَ ﴿١٩٨﴾ ثُمَّ اَفِيْضُوْا مِنْ حَيْثُ
اَفَاضَ النَّاسُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللّٰهَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿١٩٩﴾ فَاِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ
مَّنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ اٰبَآءَكُمْ اَوْ اَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا ؕ فَمِنَ النَّاسِ
مَنْ يَّقُوْلُ رَبَّنَآ اٰتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهٗ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ ﴿٢٠٠﴾ وَ

Go on fighting with them till there is no more a state of tribulation and Allah's way is established instead.[204] Then if they desist from it, there should be no more hostility except against those who had been guilty of cruelty and brutality.[205] 193

A prohibited month is to be respected, if the same is respected (by the enemy),[206] and likewise there is the law of just retribution for the violation of all prohibited things. Therefore, if anyone transgresses a prohibition by attacking you, you may do likewise, but always fear Allah and bear in mind that Allah is with those who desist from breaking Allah's bounds. 194

Spend your wealth in the Way of Allah and do not cast yourselves into ruin with your own hands.[207] Do all things gracefully, for Allah loves those who do all things with excellence.[208] 195

When you make up your mind to perform Hajj and 'Umrah, accomplish these to please Allah. But if you are hemmed in somewhere, then offer to Allah whatever sacrifice you can afford.[209] And do not shave your heads until the sacrifice reaches its place.[210] But whoever among you is sick or has an ailment of the head and has his head shaved shall atone for this either by fasting or by alms-giving or by offering a sacrifice.[211] However, when you are secure[212] (and you reach Makkah before the Hajj season begins), whoever takes advantage of this opportunity to perform 'Umrah shall offer the sacrifice that he can afford. But if he cannot afford a sacrifice, he shall fast three days during the Hajj season and seven days after reaching home, that is, ten days in all. This concession is only for those whose homes are not near the Masjid Haram,[213] refrain from transgressing these Commandments of Allah and know it well that Allah is very severe in punishment. 196

The months for Hajj are well known to all; whoever makes up his mind to perform Hajj during these fixed months, let him totally abstain from all sorts of sexual indulgence,[214] wickedness[215] and wrangling[216] during the Hajj and remember that Allah knows whatever good you do. Take necessary provisions for Hajj, and piety is the best of all provisions: so refrain from disobeying Me, O men of understanding![217] And there is nothing wrong if you also seek the bounty of your Lord during the pilgrimage.[218] Moreover, when you return from 'Arafat, stay at Mash'aril-Haram (Muzdalifah) and remember Allah. 197-200

And remember Him just as He has enjoined you, for you had gone astray before this.[219] Then return from where others return and ask Allah's forgiveness.[220] Most surely He is Forgiving and Merciful. And when you have performed your Hajj rites, remember Allah as you had been remembering your own forefathers, or even with greater zeal.[221] (Even those who remember Allah do it in different ways). Some say, "Our Lord, give us all the good things here in this world." Such people shall have no share in the Hereafter.

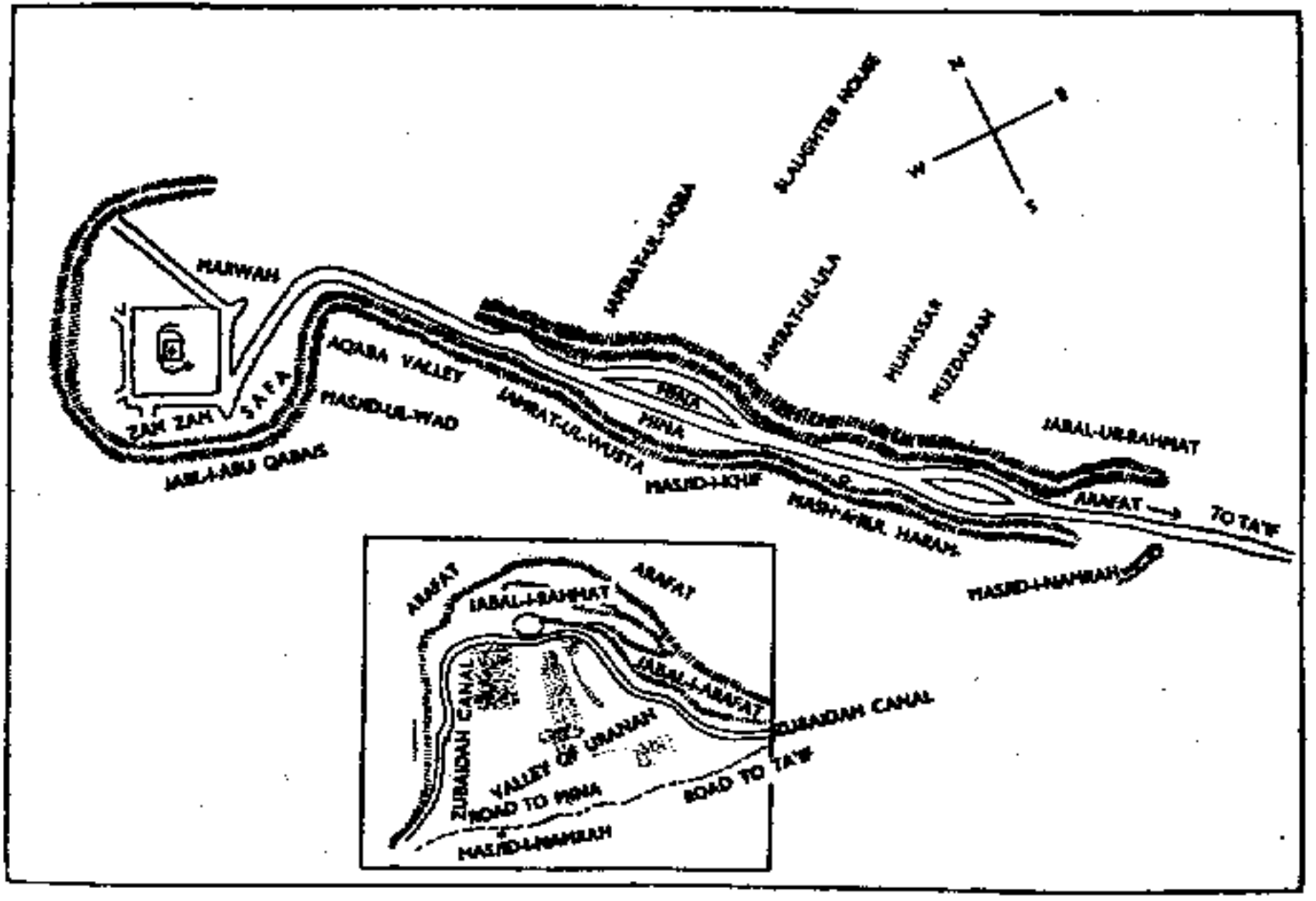
Contd. from p. 141]

196. The wording of the Commandment about the extreme limits is very significant. It not only prohibits one from transgressing them but also warns one not even to go near them. It is very dangerous to roam about on the boundary lines of the forbidden territory for one is liable to enter into it by mistake. Going near them has, therefore, been prohibited. The Holy Prophet emphasized the same point, saying, "Every king has some reserved land and Allah's 'reserved' land is bounded by those limits which prescribe the lawful and the unlawful, the right and the wrong. The animal which grazes near the last bounds of the reserved land might one day enter into it." It is a pity that, inspite of this clear warning, many people, who are ignorant of the spirit of Islāmic law, persist in going to the extreme limits and many "learned" people try to find excuses for them from the same Islāmic Code of Law that warns the Muslims not to go near the boundary line. That is why many people get involved in vice and stray from the straight path. Obviously, it is not an easy thing to demarcate these fine boundary lines and to control oneself from transgressing them, when one is roaming near them.

197. This verse has two aspects: One should not try to seize the property of another by bribing the judges, and one should not go to the court of law to seize the property of another through specious arguments. It is just possible that the judge might decide, on the basis of available evidence, in favour of the transgressor, but it does not mean that the property has thereby really become lawful for him. The Holy Prophet warned such people, saying, "After all I am a human being. It is just possible that in a case brought before me, one better versed in the art of talking than his opponent might persuade me to decide the case in his favour. But let it be understood that anything gained in this way from a brother will, in fact, mean the acquiring of a piece of Hell for himself in spite of my decree in his favour."

198. The phases of the moon have attracted the attention of mankind in every age, and different kinds of rites and superstitions have been connected with these in every country. The Arabs also had some superstitions connected with

Map II (Showing the places to be visited in connection with Hajj)
The Meaning of the Quran, facing page 146.



these. They took omens from them for journeys, marriage ceremonies, business, etc., and performed some superstitious practices, for they believed that the phases and the eclipse of the moon affected their fortunes. Therefore they questioned the Holy Prophet concerning this. Allah answered their question and informed them that the phases of the moon were nothing but natural calendar in the sky to indicate dates of the month to the people simultaneously throughout the world. Hajj has been specially mentioned in this connection because of its religious, cultural and economic importance to the Arabs. Four months of the year were fixed for Hajj and 'Umrah during which war was suspended and the routes were made safe, and business flourished on account of peace.

199. This was one of their superstitious customs. As soon as they put on the *Ihram*, the ceremonial dress for Hajj, they would not enter their houses by the front doors, but would enter them by jumping over the walls or through windows in the rear of their houses. In this verse, Allah has not only refuted this superstitious custom but also warned that virtue has nothing to do with the superstitious rites and customs which were being practised merely in blind imitation of their forefathers, for they did not affect the fortune of man in any way.

200. That is, "Fight with those people who hinder you from the way of Allah; who have become your enemies because you are trying to reform the way of life in accordance with the Guidance of Allah; who are preventing you from the work of reform by force and persecution."

Before this, when the Muslims were yet weak and scattered, they were commanded to propagate Islām and bear all tyrannies with fortitude. But when they had established a tiny state at Madinah they were, for the first time, allowed to go to war against those who were opposing this reformative movement with force. The battle of Badr took place after this and a series of battles started with it.

201. The Muslims were warned that the aim of their war should not be self-interest nor material gain nor retaliation. They should not, therefore, go to war against those who were neither opposing them nor hindering them from their work. Besides this, the Holy Prophet gave detailed instructions for keeping the war humane. He asked the Muslims to refrain from barbaric methods in warfare and from doing any kind of harm or injury to children, women, old people and the wounded. He also prohibited the dishonouring of the dead bodies of the slain, the wanton destruction of harvests, trees, animals, etc., and all other forms of cruelty, barbarism and vandalism. The Muslims were allowed to use force only where it was absolutely indispensable and to the extent it was absolutely necessary.

202. "Persecution and suppression of opinion by violence, force or threat," is the exact translation of the Arabic word "*fitnah*," as used in this verse.

The verse implies that it is a heinous offence to persecute a person or party by harassing and oppressive treatment for holding ideas and theories opposed to those in vogue at the time, and it is abominable to inflict on people injury and punishment for adhering to and propagating those ideas and theories with a view to reforming the ways of society. Though bloodshed is an evil thing, to oppress and harass others for adhering to their own faith and principles and to force them to give these up and adopt those of the oppressors is far worse. Therefore it is lawful and justifiable to use force against such people as a resort to brute force instead of argument.

203. That is, "You should create in yourselves those qualities which are the attributes of Allah in Whom you believe. He forgives even the worst offenders and criminals and shows mercy to them. You also should try to mould yourselves after this model. Your war should not be to quench your thirst for revenge but for the cause of Allah. As long as they oppose the way of Allah and continue their fight against you, you also should fight against them, but no sooner do they stop fighting and give up their hostile attitude than you also should stop fighting."

204. Here the word "*fitnah*" has been used in a different sense from that in verse 191. The context clearly shows that here it denotes that condition of society which is not safe and free for adoption of the Way of Allah. That is why the Muslims have been exhorted to continue the fight to change this state of affairs and to restore peace and freedom for the way of Allah. It should also be noted that the Arabic word '*dīn*' which has been translated here into "Way" originally means "submission" and is technically used for the way of life which is built on the sovereignty of someone whose commands and regulations are to be followed. Therefore that condition of society in which there is the rule and sovereignty of man over man and in which it is not possible for anyone to follow the Way of Allah is *fitnah*. The aim of war in Islām is to abolish *fitnah* and establish Allah's Way so as to enable people to live as servants of Allah in accordance with the Divine Law.

205. It does not mean that Islām incites the believers to go to war to force unbelievers at the point of sword to give up disbelief and polytheism and adopt the Way of Allah instead. War is to be waged only to make them give up *fitnah*. As a matter of fact, Islām allows freedom of belief to all non-Muslims. One may adopt any way of life that one chooses and may or may not worship anyone or anything. It exhorts the believers to preach and to persuade the unbelievers and the wrong-doers by argument to give up their false faith and evil ways, but it does not allow the unbelievers the right to enforce on God's earth any ungodly law and make the servants of Allah the servants of some one else. In order to remove such an unjust condition, Islām allows both preaching and fighting according to the requirements

of the occasion. The believers, therefore, cannot rest content unless this *fitnah*, political domination and legal sovereignty of unbelievers, is eradicated and freedom for the Way of Allah is secured.

From the words, "Then if they desist from it, there should be no more hostility except against those who had been guilty of cruelty and brutality," it has been deduced that when the Islāmic rule replaces ungodly rule, there should be a general amnesty save for those who had been extremely cruel and tyrannous in opposing the Truth when in power. Although in this case also it behoves the believers to show forgiveness at the time of victory, yet they would be perfectly justified in punishing those who broke all limits in their blind opposition and persecution. The Holy Prophet, who was an embodiment of mercy and clemency, himself availed of this permission and sentenced to death 'Uqbah bin Abī Mu'ait and Nadr bin Harith, two prisoners of war taken in the battle of Badr. Moreover, although a general amnesty was proclaimed after the conquest of Makkah, seventeen persons who were the worst offenders against Islām were made an exception and four of these were sentenced to death.

206. This verse answered the question that arose about fighting during the four sacred months of the lunar year, that is, Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah and Muharram dedicated to Hajj and Rajab to 'Umrah. These were called the prohibited months because ever since the time of the Prophet Abraham, war, murder, robbery and every sort of violation and infringement of law were forbidden during these months so that pilgrims might go to and return from the Ka'bah in peace and security.

But by and by the Arabs began to violate their sanctity by a crooked device. They used to alter the usual order of the months to suit their convenience. If they wanted to attack for robbery, revenge, etc., they would violate a sacred month and then consecrate another month instead. The Muslims were, therefore, at a loss to know what to do if the unbelievers committed a breach of the sanctity of a sacred month by resorting to this vicious practice and attack them in that sacred month.

This verse removed their difficulty by allowing them to fight with them in a sacred month, if the disbelievers began hostilities in it but they, on their part, should not transgress the limits in any case: and if the unbelievers observed the sanctity of the sacred months and desisted from war, the Muslims also should do the same, but if they violated the same and attacked the Muslims, they should also retaliate in the same prohibited month.

207. "To spend in the Way of Allah" is to make monetary sacrifices for the establishment of the way of life prescribed by Allah. The verse implies, "If

you behave selfishly and do not spend your wealth to establish the Way of Allah, you will bring yourselves to ruin in this world and to damnation in the Hereafter. In the world, Allah will set the unbelievers to dominate over you, and, in the Hereafter, He will condemn you and hold you accountable for not spending the wealth by Him in His Way."

208. The word *ihsan* as used in the original is from *husn* which means to do a thing well. One kind of action is that a person should rest content with the mere performance of duty: this is obedience, which requires nothing more than the fear of Allah. The superior kind of deed, however, is that he should do it well: should put all his abilities and resources into it; should exert his utmost to complete it with all his heart and mind and body. This is *ihsan* which is motivated by a deep love for and dedication to Allah.

209. That is, "In case you are prevented in the way from proceeding on to the Ka'bah and are obliged to break your journey, you should make offering of whatever animal is available — camel, cow, goat — to Allah."

210. There is a difference of opinion as to what is meant here by "the sacrifice reaching its place". According to the Hanafi school of thought, it refers to the bounds of the Masjid Haram. If a person is prevented on the way, he should send the animal or the money to buy one to be sacrificed there on his behalf. According to Imam Malik and Imam Shafe'i, the sacrifice should be made at the very place where one has been prevented. One should not have one's head shaved or the hair cut until one has offered the animal sacrifice.

211. According to a Tradition, the Holy Prophet directed that in such a case, one should observe fast for three days or feed six indigent persons or sacrifice at least a goat.

212. "Security" here refers to the removal of the cause, whatever that might have been, including the hostility of an enemy, and whatever was mainly responsible for the prevention from Hajj at that time. Just as "prevention" includes all the causes which prevent one from performing Hajj, so security includes the removal of all the causes of prevention.

213. Before the advent of Islām, the Arabs thought it was a great sin to perform both Hajj and 'Umrah during one and the same journey. According to their self-made law, different journeys had to be undertaken for each. In this verse Allah removed the self-imposed restriction save for those who lived within the appointed bounds of the "Sanctuary," because it was not difficult for them to undertake different journeys for Hajj and 'Umrah. They had merely to put off the pilgrim's garment (*ihram*) and release themselves from the prescribed restrictions

and ceremonials after the performance of 'Umrah and then renew the same during the Hajj days.

In order to understand the references to the Hajj rites in the succeeding verses, it will be worthwhile to state these briefly. The pilgrims should put on the pilgrims' garment (*ihram*) as soon as they reach a *miqat*, one of the fixed points on all the roads to Makkah. After this they should abide by the code prescribed for Hajj. If on reaching Makkah, a pilgrim wished to perform 'Umrah, he might then put off *ihram* and release himself from restrictions imposed by it up to the 7th of Dhul-Hijjah. On the 8th, he should again put on *ihram* at Makkah and go to Mina, a valley, about six miles from there. On the 9th he should proceed to the valley of 'Arafat, which is about five miles further from Mina and stay there up to the evening. Then he should return to Mash'aril-Haram (Muzdalifah) which is midway between 'Arafat and Mina, and pass the night between the 9th and the 10th there in prayer, meditation and devotion. On the morning of the 10th, he should come back to Mina and offer sacrifice there. After this he should get his head shaved, put off the *ihram* and return to Makkah and perform *Tawwaf-i-Ziarat* (going round the Ka'bah). Then he should go to Mina and stay there for two or three days. The three days (from the 11th to the 13th of Dhul-Hijjah) are called the days of "*Tashriq.*"

214. While in the state of *ihram*, not only intercourse between husband and wife is prohibited but that sort of conversation too, which might excite sexual passions.

215. Though all sorts of evil deeds are unlawful at all times, they become all the more grave when committed during the course of Hajj.

216. One cannot even rebuke a servant.

217. Before the advent of Islām, taking of provisions for the pilgrimage journey was considered to be a worldly act and it was expected that a pious man would go to the House of Allāh without any worldly goods. Here it is declared that it is no virtue to go without provisions on pilgrimage to Makkah. Real virtue is that one should fear God, obey Him and keep one's life pure. If a pilgrim does not take any provisions with him, but commits evil deeds without any fear of Allah, he makes a profitless show of piety. In the sight of Allah and men, such a man will dishonour both himself and the pilgrimage he is performing. On the other hand, if a pilgrim has fear of Allah embedded in his heart and keeps his morals pure, he will gain honour with Allah and men, though he may have provided himself fully with provisions.

218. The Arabs had another wrong notion about Hajj. They considered it

[Contd. on p. 152

مِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَّقُوْلُ رَبَّنَآ اٰتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَّفِي الْاٰخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَّقِنَا
عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿٢٠١﴾ اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيْبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوْا ۭ وَاللّٰهُ سَرِيْعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٠٢﴾
وَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ فِيْٓ اَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُوْدٰتٍ ۭ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِيْ يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَآ اِثْمَ
عَلَيْهِ ۚ وَمَنْ تَاَخَّرَ فَلَآ اِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۙ لِمَنِ اتَّقٰى ۭ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاعْلَمُوْٓا
اَنَّكُمْ اِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُوْنَ ﴿٢٠٣﴾ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُّعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهٗ فِي الْحَيٰوةِ
الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهِدُ اللّٰهَ عَلٰي مَا فِيْ قَلْبِهٖ ۙ وَهُوَ اَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ ﴿٢٠٤﴾ وَاِذَا تَوَلّٰى
سَعٰى فِي الْاَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيْهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْفَسَادَ ﴿٢٠٥﴾ وَاِذَا قِيْلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللّٰهَ اَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْاِثْمِ فَحَسْبُهٗ
جَهَنَّمُ ۭ وَلَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ﴿٢٠٦﴾ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَّشْرِيْ نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاۗءَ
مَرْضَاتِ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ رَءُوْفٌۢ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿٢٠٧﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا ادْخُلُوْا
فِي السِّلْمِ كَاۗفَّةً ۠ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوْا خُطُوٰتِ الشَّيْطٰنِ ۭ اِنَّهٗ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿٢٠٨﴾
فَاِنْ زَلَلْتُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَاۗءَتْكُمُ الْبَيِّنٰتُ فَاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿٢٠٩﴾
هَلْ يَنْظُرُوْنَ اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَهُمُ اللّٰهُ فِيْ ظُلَلٍ مِّنَ الْغَمَامِ وَالْمَلٰۗىِٕكَةُ وَ
قُضِيَ الْاَمْرُ ۭ وَاِلَى اللّٰهِ تُرْجَعُ الْاُمُوْرُ ﴿٢١٠﴾ سَلْ بَنِيْٓ اِسْرَاۗءِيْلَ كَمْ اٰتَيْنٰهُمْ
مِّنْ اٰيَةٍۢ بَيِّنَةٍ ۭ وَمَنْ يُّبَدِّلْ نِعْمَةَ اللّٰهِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَاۗءَتْهُ فَاِنَّ
اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٢١١﴾ زُيِّنَ لِلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوا الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا وَيَسْخَرُوْنَ
مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۘ وَالَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ يَرْزُقُ
مَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٢١٢﴾ كَانَ النَّاسُ اُمَّةً وَّاحِدَةً ۟ فَبَعَثَ اللّٰهُ
النَّبِيّٖنَ مُبَشِّرِيْنَ وَمُنْذِرِيْنَ ۠ وَاَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ

Then there are others who say, "Our Lord, give us what is good in this world and also what is good in the Hereafter and save us from the torment of Fire." Such people shall have their due share (in both the worlds) according to what they earn. And Allah is swift at settling accounts. So pass these few appointed days in remembering Allah; then there is nothing wrong if one hastens on (from Mina) after two days or stays there (a day) longer,[222] provided that he spends these days in piety. Do not disobey Him and remember that One Day you shall be mustered before Him. 201-203

There is a certain type of man who charms you in this worldly life with his glib talk. He calls Allah to witness again and again that he cherishes good intentions in his heart,[223] whereas, in fact, he is the deadliest opponent[224] of the Truth. When he gets power[225] he directs all his efforts towards spreading mischief in the land, destroying harvests and killing the human race — whereas Allah (Whom he makes his witness) does not like mischief. And when it is said to him, "Fear Allah," vanity seizes him and makes him adhere to the sin. Hell is the proper place for such a person and it is a very bad dwelling indeed. On the other side, there is another type of man who devotes his whole life to please Allah, and Allah is gracious to such of His servants. O Believers, enter completely into Islām[226] and do not follow in the footsteps of Satan, for he is your avowed enemy. If you lapse back after receiving the clear teachings that have come to you, know it well that Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise.[227] (If people do not follow the right way even after receiving such clear admonitions), do they await that Allah Himself should come down to them in the canopies of clouds with a retinue of angels, and seal their doom?[228] Ultimately every thing shall be presented before Allah (for judgement). 204-210

Ask the children of Israel how many a clear sign We have shown to them: (also ask them) what a severe chastisement Allah inflicts on the community that, after receiving Allah's favour exchanges it (for wretchdness).[229] 211

This worldly life has been made very charming and alluring for those who have adopted the way of disbelief. So they mock at those who have adopted the way of belief,but (they forget that) the pious people will rank above them on the Day of Resurrection. As to the wordly provisions, Allah has full authority and power to bestow these without 212

measure on anyone He wills.

Contd from . P 149.]

a worldly thing to do any kind of business during the Hajj season. The Qur'ān removes this misconception also and declares that if a pious man observes the Law of Allah and then does some business to earn his livelihood, he really seeks the bounty of Allah. And there is nothing wrong in seeking the bounty of Allah along with seeking His pleasure.

219. That is, "You should give up all those ungodly customs of ignorance which you used to practise in pre-Islāmic days along with the worship of Allah. Now worship Allah exclusively in accordance with the Guidance He has revealed."

220. Ever since the time of the Prophet Abraham and Ishmael (may Allah's peace be upon them), the pilgrims used to go to 'Arafat from Makkah on the 9th of Dhul-Hijjah for the performance of Hajj and then returned from there to Muzdalifah on the morning of the 10th. But later when the Quraish established their own priesthood, they arrogantly asserted: "It is below our dignity to go to 'Arafat along with the common Arabs because we live in the Sanctuary." Accordingly, they reserved this mark of distincion for themselves and would halt at Muzdalifah and let others proceed on to 'Arafat. Then this distinction was extended to Banī Khuza'ah and Banī Kinanah and the other tribes with whom the Quraish had marriage relations. Later, even the allies of the Quraish adopted this privilege of distinction and they too would stop short of 'Arafat. In this verse the same privilege of distinction and pride has been abolished. Addressing the Quraish, their relatives and allies in particular and the common Arabs in general it has been enjoined that they should accompany others to perform the essential ceremonials at 'Arafat, halt there and return along with them to Makkah, and should ask Allah's forgiveness for their breach of the Prophet Abraham's way, which they committed in the past on account of tribal pride and distinction.

221. After performing their Hajj, the Arabs used to hold meetings in Mina and brag about their own achievements and those of their forefathers. Here they were told to give up these customs of ignorance, and pass their time in remembering and glorifying Allah instead of singing praises of their ancestors.

222. That is, "It does not matter whether you return from Mina to Makkah on the 12th or the 13th of Dhul-Hijjah during the *Tashriq* days. The real thing that matters is not the number of days you stayed at Mina but whether you spent those days in establishing your relation with Allah during those days or in merry making."

223. This typical man of the world pretends to show that he is a sincere well-wisher of the people. Time and again he assures the people, saying, "Allah is my witness that I intend nothing but good. I am not working for self-interest but for the sake of truth and right and for the welfare of the people." But all glib talk of this worldly-wise man is hypocritical.

224. He is "the deadliest opponent of the truth." because in his enmity, he does not hesitate to employ any kind of falsehood, dishonesty, treachery or any other crooked method, in spite of his smooth tongue, plausible talk and solemn oaths in the name of Allah.

225. It may also mean, "When he returns to everyday life after this glib talk."

226. That is, "Come into the fold of Islām completely without any reservation. Your thoughts, your theories, your culture, your sciences, your manners, your dealings, your efforts etc., should in every aspect of life, be subordinated to Islām. You should not divide your life into different compartments so as to follow Islām in one and discard it in the other."

227. That is, He is All-Powerful and also knows how to punish the criminals.

228. Particular attention should be paid to these words for they enunciate a great universal truth. Allah has sent man to this world to undergo a test. He has revealed the Truth through His Messengers and given man the freedom to believe or not to believe in it, and after believing in it to submit or not to submit to it. He keeps the Reality hidden from man and leaves it to him to judge it rationally in the light of the teachings of his Messengers, His Books and the Signs shown by His Messengers. He never makes the Reality so naked as to leave no alternative but to acknowledge it, for after that no question of a trial is left and success or failure in the test becomes meaningless. That is why Allah gives warning, as if to say, "Do not wait for that time when Allah with His angels will come before you in His glory. At that time your doom shall be sealed and no more chance left for any test. Then belief and submission will have no value. Belief has a value only as long as the Reality remains hidden from your senses and you recognize and acknowledge it by means of your own reasoning and then prove your moral courage by submitting to it without any coercion. When you see with your own eyes Allah on the throne of His glory and angels functioning on the earth and in the heavens and find yourself completely in His power, then belief and submission will have no value. At that time even confirmed sinners and obdurate unbelievers will not dare to disbelieve or disobey. But then it will be useless because the time for test will be

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بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِيمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ ۚ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ فِيهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوهُ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ فَهَدَى اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ
مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢١٣﴾ أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ ۖ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ
وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَىٰ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ ﴿٢١٤﴾
يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ ۖ قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَ
الْأَقْرَبِينَ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ ۗ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢١٥﴾ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهٌ لَكُمْ ۖ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ
تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ۖ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ ۗ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢١٦﴾ يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ
فِيهِ ۖ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ ۖ وَصَدٌّ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ
الْحَرَامِ ۖ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ ۗ
وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَنْ دِينِكُمْ إِنِ اسْتَطَاعُوا ۚ وَمَنْ
يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ
فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢١٧﴾ إِنَّ
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۙ أُولَٰئِكَ يَرْجُونَ
رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٢١٨﴾ يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ ۖ قُلْ
فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ ۖ وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَفْعِهِمَا ۗ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ

In the beginning all the people followed the same way. 213
(Afterwards there came a change and differences arose). Then Allah sent Prophets to give good tidings to those who followed the Right Way and warnings to those who swerved from it. And He sent down with them the Book based on the Truth so that it should judge between the people concerning their differences. — (Differences arose not because people were not given the knowledge of the Truth in the beginning, nay), differences arose between those very people who had been given clear teachings, and (for no other reasons than that) they wanted to tyrannize over one another.[230] So Allah, by His leave, guided those who believed in the Prophets to the Truth about which they had differed; Allah guides whomever He pleases to the Right Way.

Do[231] you think that you will enter Paradise without undergoing 214
such trials as were experienced by the believers before you? They met with adversity and affliction and were so shaken by trials that the Prophet of the time and his followers cried out: "When will Allah's help come"? — (Then they were comforted with the good tidings): "Yes, Allah's help is near."

The people ask, "What should we spend?" Tell them, "Whatever 215
you spend, spend for your parents, your relatives, orphans, the needy and the wayfarer; and whatever good you do, Allah has knowledge of it."

You have been enjoined to go to war, and you dislike it; it may 16
be that you dislike a thing and the same is good for you, and you love a thing and the same is bad for you: Allah knows but you do not.

They ask you (O Muhammad) concerning warfare in the 217-218
prohibited month. Say, "Fighting is a heinous offence in this month, but in the sight of Allah it is far worse to hinder people from the Way of Allah and to deny Him and to prevent His worshippers from visiting the Masjidal-Haram, and to expel the dwellers of the sacred place from it; and persecution is far worse than bloodshed."[232] As for them, they will go on fighting with you till they succeed in turning you away from your Faith, if they can. But (note it well that) whosoever renounces his Faith and dies a renegade, all his works shall be fruitless both in this world and in the Hereafter. All such people deserve the Fire and shall abide in Hell for ever.[233] In contrast to them, those, who have believed

and left their homes in the way of Allah and exerted their utmost in His cause,[234] rightly look forward to His mercy: and Allah is Forgiving and full of mercy.

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over. When the curtain is raised and the 'Reality' is seen by everyone, then no more chance shall be given nor shall there be any more test because that will be the time of the Judgement.

229. The Muslims have been told to enquire about it especially from the children of Israel because the latter were a living object lesson for the former who were now replacing them as leaders of the world. The children of Israel had been favoured with Prophethood and Divine Book and had been entrusted with leadership for the guidance of the world but they had deprived themselves of this blessing (leadership) for involving themselves in wretchedness — in the lusts of this worldliness, duplicity and in the evil deeds of pseudo-knowledge. Therefore the Muslims who were replacing them were forewarned to be on their guard against these evils and learn a lesson from their history.

230. Here the theory of evolution in religion has been refuted. The so-called scholars say that man began his religious life in the darkness of polytheism; then by and by he began to worship God, but associated other gods with Him. This went on for a long time; at last he recognized and accepted the Oneness of God. But the Qur'ān contradicts this and says that human life began in full Divine light. When Allah created the first Man, Adam, He revealed the Truth to him and showed him the Right Way. Adam's descendants followed his way for a long time and all of them were members of one and the same community. Then they began to follow new ways and invented new religions. And they did so inspite of the fact that the Truth had been shown to them just because they wanted to misappropriate to themselves more than their own due share and rights sanctioned by it. In order to prevent the misguided people, from this evil, Allah sent His Messengers to invite them to the original Divine Way. They were not sent to found new religious communities after their own names, but to bring those who had swerved from the Right path to the original religion of mankind and to the same one community which was formed in accordance with the Guidance of Allah, at the time when Man began his life on the earth.

231. A whole story has been left out between this verse and the preceding one, for this verse itself points to it and because it had already been related in detail in the Sūrahs which were revealed before this at Makkah. In the preceding verse it was stated that the Messengers were sent to remove those differences which had arisen in religion, but the story of their hardships and long persecutions

was omitted because it had already been described in detail in the Makki Revelations. Hence the believers are warned that the Messengers and their followers have always had to struggle hard with the rebels against Allah in order to establish His Way, and that the true Faith of Islām has never been a bed of roses. One has to exert one's utmost to establish it and to fight against all those evil forces that oppose its establishment, even at the sacrifice of one's life, if need be.

232. The objection, which was raised in the form of a question about warfare in the sacred month, refers to an incident which took place in the month of Rajab in the second year of Hijra.

The Holy Prophet sent a detachment of eight men to Nakhlah, a place midway between Makkah and Ta'if. He told them to watch the movements of the Quraish and find out their future plans. Though he had not given them permission to fight, they attacked a small trading caravan of the Quraish, killed one man and took the rest prisoners and brought them to Madinah along with their goods.

As this incident took place at a time when it could not be said with certainty whether the month of Rajab had come to an end and the month of Sha'ban had commenced, it was doubtful whether the attack was made in Rajab, a prohibited month, or in Sha'ban. Nevertheless, the Quraish and their secret allies, the Jews, and the doublefaced "Muslims" of Madinah, took it as a God-given opportunity to make strong propaganda and raise serious objections against the Believers. They ironically remarked, "What a pious people they are! They do not hesitate to shed blood even in a prohibited month." Such objections have been answered in this verse which implies, "No doubt, bloodshed is a very bad thing but their objection is not reasonable, coming as it does from the mouths of those people who themselves had carried on for thirteen years the most cruel form of persecution against hundreds of their own brethren for no other reason than that they believed in one Allah. They not only forced these brethren of their own to leave their beloved homes but also prevented them from paying a visit to the Ka'bah, although this sacred place was not the property of anyone. Their crime was all the more heinous because such a wicked antagonism had never existed during the previous two thousand years or so. Therefore those workers of iniquity, the list of whose crimes was so black, had no right to raise objections on the basis of a trivial border incident." Moreover, this incident took place without the permission of the Holy Prophet, and was, therefore, nothing more than an irresponsible act on the part of a few members of the Islāmic party.

It should also be kept in view that when this detachment came to the Holy Prophet with the prisoners and the spoils, he said, "I never gave you permission to

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مَاذَا يُنْفِقُوْنَ ۙ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ ۭ كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمُ الْاٰيٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَتَفَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٢١٩﴾ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ۭ وَيَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الْيَتٰمٰى ۭ قُلْ اِصْلَاحٌ
لَّهُمْ خَيْرٌ ۭ وَاِنْ تُخَالِطُوْهُمْ فَاِخْوَانُكُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ ۭ
وَلَوْ شَاۗءَ اللّٰهُ لَاَعْنَتَكُمْ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿٢٢٠﴾ وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكٰتِ حَتّٰى
يُؤْمِنَّ ۭ وَلَاَمَةٌ مُّؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَّلَوْ اَعْجَبَتْكُمْ ۚ وَلَا تُنْكِحُوا
الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ حَتّٰى يُؤْمِنُوْا ۭ وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكٍ وَّلَوْ اَعْجَبَكُمْ ۭ
اُولٰۗىِٕكَ يَدْعُوْنَ اِلَى النَّارِ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ يَدْعُوْٓا اِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِاِذْنِهٖ ۚ
وَيُبَيِّنُ اٰيٰتِهٖ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٢٢١﴾ وَيَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيْضِ ۭ قُلْ
هُوَ اَذًى ۙ فَاعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاۗءَ فِي الْمَحِيْضِ ۙ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوْهُنَّ حَتّٰى يَطْهُرْنَ ۚ فَاِذَا
تَطَهَّرْنَ فَاْتُوْهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ اَمَرَكُمُ اللّٰهُ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِيْنَ وَيُحِبُّ
الْمُتَطَهِّرِيْنَ ﴿٢٢٢﴾ نِسَاۗؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ ۠ فَاْتُوْا حَرْثَكُمْ اَنّٰى شِئْتُمْ ۡ وَقَدِّمُوْا
لِاَنْفُسِكُمْ ۭ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّكُمْ مُّلٰقُوْهُ ۭ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٢٢٣﴾ وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا
اللّٰهَ عُرْضَةً لِّاَيْمَانِكُمْ اَنْ تَبَرُّوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا وَتُصْلِحُوْا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ
سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٢٤﴾ لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللّٰهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِيْٓ اَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلٰكِنْ يُّؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا
كَسَبَتْ قُلُوْبُكُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ حَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٢٥﴾ لِلَّذِيْنَ يُؤْلُوْنَ مِنْ نِّسَاۗىِٕهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ
اَرْبَعَةِ اَشْهُرٍ ۚ فَاِنْ فَاۗءُوْ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿٢٢٦﴾ وَاِنْ عَزَمُوا الطَّلَاقَ
فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٢٧﴾ وَالْمُطَلَّقٰتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِاَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلٰثَةَ قُرُوْۗءٍ ۭ وَ
لَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ اَنْ يَّكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللّٰهُ فِيْٓ اَرْحَامِهِنَّ اِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَّ بِاللّٰهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ ۭ وَبُعُوْلَتُهُنَّ اَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ اِنْ اَرَادُوْٓا اِصْلَاحًا ۭ

They ask you about drinking and gambling. Say, "There is great harm in both, though there is some benefit also for the people. But the harm of the sin thereof is far greater than their benefit."[235] 219

And they ask"What ought we to spend (in the way of Allah)"? Say"Spend whatever you can spare." Thus Allah makes His commands clear to you so that you may think about the good of both this world and the Hereafter. 220

They ask you about the right way of dealing with orphans. Say "The right way is that which is for their good."[236] Then there is no harm if you live a common life with them for they are after all your own brethren. Allah knows well the one who means harm and also the one who means good. If Allah had willed He would have been hard upon you in this matter for He is All-Powerful but He is at the same time All-Wise.

Do not marry *mushrik* women unless they believe; a slave woman who believes is better than a free woman who does not believe, even though the latter may appear very attractive to you. (Likewise) do not wed your women to *mushrik* men unless they believe; a slave man who believes is better than a free man who does not, even though he may be very pleasing to you. These *mushrik* people invite you to the Fire[237] while Allah by His grace invites you to the Garden and His pardon, and He makes His revelations plain to the people so that they should learn a lesson and follow the admonition.

They ask about the monthly course. Say, "It is a state of impurity;[238] so keep apart from women during their monthly course and do not go near them until they are clean.[239] When they have cleansed themselves, then you may go to them in the manner Allah has enjoined you."[240] Most surely Allah loves those people who refrain from evil and keep themselves pure and clean. Your wives are your tilth : so you may go to your tilth as you please,[241] but you should take care of your future[242] and refrain from the displeasure of Allah. Know it well that One Day you shall meet Him. (O Prophet !) bear good tidings to the Believers. 222-223

Do not use Allah's name for such oaths which are taken to keep back from virtue, piety and the welfare of mankind:[243] Allah hears everything you utter and knows everything. Allah does not call you to 224-225

account for unintentional and meaningless oaths,[244] but will surely take you to task for oaths taken deliberately and in earnest : Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing.

226-227 Those who take an oath to keep apart from their wives are given four months (for a final decision).[245] Then if they resume their relations, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.[246] And if they resolve on divorce, [247] (let them remember that) Allah hears everything and knows everything.

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fight." He also refused to accept the share due to the public treasury from the spoils. This clearly showed that it was an unlawful and unauthorised act. The common Muslims also took their men to task for this incident and there was not a single Muslim in the whole of Madinah who approved of this act of theirs.

233. Some simple-minded Muslims regarded as genuine the above-mentioned objection raised by the disbelievers and the Jews. They were under the wrong impression that this and the like were honest objections, and if they were removed, the objectors would be satisfied and there would be peace with them. In this verse, these Muslims have been warned not to cherish any such expectations about them because they did not raise these objections for clarification but to make propaganda against the Muslims. Their real objection against the Muslims was that they had accepted Islām and were inviting the world to it. There could, therefore, be no peace between them and the objectors as long as they stuck to their belief in Allah. Therefore the Muslims were told not to under-rate the enemies of their Faith. They should remember that the one who tries to turn them away from their Faith is a worse enemy than the one who tries to rob them of their wealth, for the latter tries to ruin only their life in this world, which is after all transitory, while the former tries to ruin their life in the Hereafter, which is eternal.

234. The word "*jihad*" means to exert one's utmost for the achievement of an object. It is not a synonym for "holy war" but has a far wider meaning than this and covers every kind of effort. And the *mujahid* is one who is always after the achievement of his ideal, plans for it, propagates it with his tongue and pen and struggles for it with all his heart and body. In short, he spends all his efforts and resources for its achievement and fights against all those forces that oppose it; so much so that he does not hesitate to put even his very life in danger for his ideal. The struggle and fight to such a person will be technically *Jihad*. A Muslim, however, is required to do all this in the way of Allah alone under certain moral restrictions for establishing the Way prescribed by Him and for elevating His

Muslim in performing *Jihad*. It has thus become clear that the *Jihad* of a Muslim is not "general war of extermination against infidels"

235. This was the first instruction about alcoholic and intoxicating drinks and games of chance for stakes. At first a mere disapproval of these things was pronounced to serve as a preliminary to their final prohibition. The next step in this direction was that the Muslims were prohibited from offering the Prayers when they were drunk. Finally drinking, gambling and the like were made absolutely unlawful. (Please refer to An-Nisa', IV: 43 and Al-Ma'idah, V: 90).

236. Before the revelation of this verse, very strict warnings had been administered for the preservation of the rights of orphans. Warnings like "those who misappropriate the property of orphans fill their bellies with fire," had made the Muslims so fearful that the guardians of the orphans had made separate arrangements for their meals etc. But, inspite of all this, they feared lest any part of the property of the orphans should get mixed up with their property and they should incur the wrath of Allah. That is why they asked the Holy Prophet to define for them the limits of their relations with orphans. They have been told to do sincerely what is best in their interest and at the same time warned that Allah knows everything.

237. The reason why the believers have been prohibited from marrying *mushrik* spouses is that 'they invite you to the Fire'. This means that such marriage might mislead the Muslim spouses to the ways of *shirk*, for the relations between husband and wife are not merely sexual but spiritual and cultural as well. It is possible that the Muslim spouse may influence the *mushrik* spouse and his or her family and their offspring in favour of the Islāmic way of life. But it is equally possible that the *mushrik* spouse may imbue the Muslim spouse, his (or her) family or their offspring, with the spirit and ways of *shirk*. Most probably as a result of such a marriage, a mixture of Islām and un-Islām will be bred in such a family. A non-Muslim might approve of this, but a Muslim cannot. One who sincerely believes in Islām can never take such a risk merely for the sake of the gratification of his lust. He would rather suppress his passions than do anything that might mislead him to disbelief, blasphemy and *shirk* or, at least mislead his progeny.

238. The Arabic word "*adhā*" stands both for illness and for uncleanliness. Menses are not only a state of impurity but also of disease. During the monthly period, women are medically nearer a state of illness than of health.

239. The Qur'ān uses indirect and covert hints and suggestions for the expression of such delicate matters. The instructions, "They should be separated" and "Do not go near them", do not mean that the women should be made untouchables during their monthly periods, as they are made by the Jews, the

Hindus and some other communities. The Holy Prophet explained that this commandment meant only to prohibit intercourse with them during the menses. All other relations with them may be continued as before.

240. The Arabic word *amr* does not refer to any legal injunction but to the natural instinct that has been embedded in the nature of every human being and animal and is known to every one.

241. Allah has not created women merely for the enjoyment and entertainment of men. The relation between the two is as serious an affair as that of a farmer and his field. The farmer does not go to his field merely for recreation and enjoyment but for cultivation to get produce from it. In the same way, a man should go to his wife to produce children. Allah's law, however, is not concerned with the method of cultivation but with the demand that man should go to the field and not elsewhere and to his own field and for production.

242. The Arabic words are comprehensive. They may imply : "You should try to produce children for the continuation of your race", or that "You must take special pains to bring up and train them morally to be good men." Here both the aspects are implied. That is why they have been warned, in the next sentence, that they shall be called to account by Allah for any deliberate disregard of these obligations.

243. We learn from authentic Traditions that if anyone takes a thoughtless oath to do or not to do a thing and afterwards realizes that fairness demands its abrogation, he should abrogate it and expiate for it. The expiation for breaking an oath is the feeding of ten needy persons or clothing them or the liberation of a slave. If one cannot afford this, he must observe fast for three days. (Please see Al-Ma'idah, V : 89).

244. There is neither expiation nor any punishment for those oaths that one utters unawares as a byword.

245. Although it is true that relations between husband and wife do not always remain cordial, yet Allah's law does not allow that the strained relations should continue indefinitely. Therefore it lays down the maximum period of four months for a separation in which they legally remain husband and wife but practically live separate lives without any conjugal relations between them. Such a separation is termed "*Ila*" in the Islāmic code of Law. During this period they must either make a reconciliation between themselves or part for good so that they may be free to marry a suitable person of their liking.

From the words "Those who take an oath" the jurists belonging to the Hanafi and Shafi'i schools of thought conclude that this period of four months applies only to those cases of separation which are made on oath; if they remain

separate for any length of time without an oath, this law would not apply to them. On the other hand, the jurists belonging to the Maliki school of thought are of the opinion that the maximum period of four months applies to all cases of separation. A saying of Imam Ahmad also supports this opinion.

Hadrat 'Ali, Ibn 'Abbas and Hasan Basri are of the opinion that this law applies only to that case of separation which is the result of strained relations, and does not apply to the case in which the husband and the wife agree to discontinue conjugal relations with mutual consent for some common good and at the same time keep cordial relations. There are other jurists who are of the opinion that the law of '*ila*' would apply to every case of separation made on oath irrespective of the fact whether their relations remain good or bad; hence it should not go beyond the prescribed term of four months.

246. Some jurists interpret this to mean that if they break their oaths within four months and re-establish conjugal relations, there would be no expiation for this; Allah will forgive the breach of their oath without expiation. But the majority of jurists are of the opinion that expiation must be made in any case. "Allah will forgive and show mercy" does not mean that the expiation will be remitted. It merely means that Allah will accept the expiation and forgive wrong done by each against the other during their separation.

247. According to the verdict of Caliph 'Uthman, Ibn Mas'ud, Zaid bin Thabit and some other jurists, they can reunite only within four months. The expiry of this term itself is a proof that the husband has decided upon divorce. Hence after its expiry, divorce will automatically take place and the husband will forfeit the right of reunion during the waiting term. If, however, both of them agree, they can remarry. There is a verdict to the same effect from Hadrat 'Umar, 'Ali, Ibn 'Abbas and Ibn 'Umar and the jurists of the Hanafi school have accepted the same.

Hadrat Sa'id bin Musayyib, Makh-ūl, Zuhri and some others are of the opinion that after the expiry of four months, there shall be an automatic divorce but this will be a single revocable divorce and the husband will have the right to reunite within the term (*'iddat*) and if he does not reunite within the term, they may remarry if they so desire.

As against this, Hadrat 'A'ishah, Abud-Darda' and many other jurists of Madinah are of the opinion that after the expiry of four months the case should be

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وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ ۗ وَ
اللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٨﴾ الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانِ ۖ فَإِمْسَاكٌ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌ
بِإِحْسَانٍ ۗ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا إِلَّا أَنْ يَخَافَا
أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ ۙ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا
فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ بِهِ ۗ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ
اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٢٢٩﴾ فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدُ حَتَّىٰ
تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ ۗ فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا إِنْ ظَنَّا
أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٠﴾ وَإِذَا
طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ ۖ
وَلَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِتَعْتَدُوا ۚ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ ۗ وَ
لَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوًا ۚ وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ
عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ
بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٣١﴾ وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ
أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ إِذَا تَرَاضَوْا بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِ
مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۗ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ ۗ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٢﴾ وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ
كَامِلَيْنِ ۖ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ ۚ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَ
كِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ لَا تُضَارَّ وَالِدَةٌ
بِوَلَدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَلَدِهِ ۚ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَٰلِكَ ۗ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا

Divorced women must wait for three monthly courses. And it is 228
not lawful for them to hide what Allah has created in their wombs, if they sincerely believe in Allah and the Last Day. Their husbands are best entitled to take[248] them back as their wives during this waiting period, if they desire reconciliation.[249]

Wives have the same rights as the husbands have on them in accordance with the generally known principles. Of course, men are a degree above them in status, and above all is Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

Divorce may be pronounced twice; then either the wife be kept 229
honourably or parted with gracefully.[250] And it is not lawful for you to take back anything out of what you have given them.[251] There is, however, an exception to this; if you fear that they might not be able to keep within the limits imposed by Allah, there is no harm if both agree mutually that the wife should obtain divorce by giving something as compensation to the husband.[252] These are the bounds set by Allah; therefore do not violate them, for those who violate the bounds of Allah are the tansgressors.

And if the husband divorces his wife (for the third time), she 230
shall not remain his lawful wife after this (absolute) divorce, unless she marries another husband and the second husband divorces her.[253] (In that case) there is no harm if they re-marry, provided that the woman and her first husband are convinced that they will be able to keep within the bounds fixed by Allah. And these are Allah's bounds, which He makes clear for the guidance of those who know (the consequences of transgression).

And when you have divorced your wives and they are about to 231
complete their prescribed term, then either retain them gracefully or release them generously. It is transgression to retain them merely for harassment; and whoever does that indeed wrongs his own self.[254] Do not play with Allah's Commandments, and remember that Allah has blessed you with a great favour. He admonishes you to show due respect to the Book and the Wisdom He has sent to you.[255] Fear Allah and know that He is fully aware of everything.

When you have divorced your wives absolutely and they have 232
completed their prescribed term, then you should not prevent them

from marrying their prospective husbands, if they mutually agree to marry each other in a lawful way.[256] You are enjoined not to commit such an offence, if you sincerely believe in Allah and the Last Day. It is most decent and pure for you to desist from this; Allah knows and you do not know.

233 The (divorced) mothers shall suckle their children for two whole years, if the fathers desire the suckling to be completed.[257] In that case the father of the child shall, in the fair known way, be responsible for their food and clothing. But none should be burdened with more than one can bear: neither the mother should be pressed unjustly (to accept unfair terms) just because she is the mother nor should the father be burdened just because he is the father. — And the same responsibility for the maintenance of the mother devolves upon the father of the child and his heir.[258] There is no harm if they wean the child by mutual consent and consultation. Moreover, there is no harm if you choose to give your children a suckle by a wet nurse, provided that you pay her fairly. Fear Allah and know it well that whatever you do is in the sight of Allah.

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taken to a court so that the judge may order the husband either to reunite with his wife or divorce her. There is also a verdict of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, Ḥaḍrat 'Ali and Ibn 'Umar to this effect and the same has been accepted by Imam Malik and Imam Shāfi'i also.

248. That is, "Fear Allah and do not divorce your wives for frivolous and unjustifiable reasons, for He knows everything."

249. Jurists differ in the interpretation of this verse. According to one section of them, divorce does not take place and the husband retains the right of reunion up to the time of the purification of the wife by a bath after the third monthly course. This is the opinion of Ḥaḍrat Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Ali, Ibn 'Abbas, Abu Musa Ash-'ari, Ibn Mas'ud and some other Companions of the first rank, and the Hanafi jurists have accepted the same. On the contrary, the other section says that the husband forfeits the right of reunion as soon as the wife has a discharge of the third monthly course. This opinion is held by Ḥaḍrat 'A'ishah, Ibn 'Umar and Zaid bin Thabit, and the Shāfe'i and the Māliki jurists have adopted the same. It must, however, be clearly understood that the husband retains the right of reunion only in the case when he has pronounced one divorce or two divorces, but he forfeits the right of reunion when he has pronounced three divorces.

250. This brief verse was meant to reform a serious social evil common in Arabia before the advent of Islām. A husband was allowed to pronounce divorce as often as he pleased. Whenever his relations were strained with his wife, he would pronounce a divorce and then reunite as and when it suited him. As there was no limit to this, it was repeated over and over again. Thus the wife could neither have conjugal relations with him nor was free to marry anyone else. This verse of the Qur'ān shuts this door of cruelty. During his whole married life, a husband may use the right of divorce and reunion with one wife only twice. After that whenever he pronounces divorce for the third time, wife shall be separated from him permanently.

In order to check hasty action and leave the door open for reconciliation at many stages, the right method of pronouncing divorce as taught in the Qur'ān and the Traditions is that if and when it becomes inevitable, it should be pronounced only when she is not in her menses and even if a dispute arises during the monthly period, it is not right to pronounce divorce during that condition, but he should wait for her to cleanse herself and then may pronounce a single divorce, if he so likes. Then he should wait for the next monthly course and pronounce the second divorce if he so wishes after she is cleansed. Then he should wait for the next monthly course to pronounce the third and final divorce after she is cleansed. It is, however, better to wait and reconsider the matter after the first and second pronouncements, for in the case of one or two divorces, the husband retains the right to take her back as his wife before the expiry of the term, and even if the term has expired, the couple has a chance to remarry by mutual consent. But if divorce is pronounced for the third time in the third period of purity, the husband forfeits the right to take her back nor can the couple remarry.

As for those ignorant people who pronounce all the three divorces in one and the same sitting, they commit a heinous sin against the Law. The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) has very severely denounced this practice and Ḥaḍrat 'Umar used to whip the husband who pronounced three divorces at one and the same sitting.

251. The husband has no right to demand anything of the dower given to the wife in consideration for the marriage or ornaments, clothes etc., given to her as gifts. It is utterly against the moral principles of Islām to ask for the return of anything given to another as a present or gift. The Holy Prophet has likened this disgraceful behaviour to the licking up of his own vomit by the dog. It is indeed very shameful on the part of a husband to keep back or demand, after the divorce, what he himself gave to his wife. As a matter of fact Islam exhorts the husband who divorces his wife to give her something at her departure. (Please see Al-Baqarah, II : 241).

252. When divorce is obtained by the wife from her husband by compensation, it is called *khulʿ* in the Islāmic Law. If the husband and the wife agree between themselves on some terms regarding this, the same shall be enforced. But if the case goes to the court, it will first of all try to ascertain whether the wife really dislikes her husband so much that she cannot live with him any longer. Then if the court is satisfied that they cannot live together happily, it shall fix as compensation anything that it considers proper, and the husband shall have to accept that and divorce his wife. The jurists are generally of the opinion that the compensation should not exceed the dower given by the husband.

In such a case, the husband forfeits the right of reunion after the divorce because it has been bought, so to speak, by the wife. Of course, it is lawful for them to remarry with mutual consent.

According to the majority of Muslims, the term for the wife in the case of *khulʿ* is the same as that of divorce. But Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and others have related Traditions to the effect that the Holy Prophet prescribed only one monthly course as the term for the wife after the divorce, and Caliph 'Uthman decided a case in accordance with this. (*Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 1, p. 276)

253. Authentic Traditions warn against any pre-arranged scheme that a certain man should marry a certain divorced woman with the understanding that he would divorce her again to enable the former husband to remarry his divorced wife. This shall be an unlawful act and such a marriage shall be no marriage at all but adultery and the woman shall not become the lawful wife of the first husband by such a prearranged scheme. Ḥaḍrat 'Ali, Ibn Mas'ud Abu Hurairah and 'Uqbah bin-'Amir, all relate the Tradition to the effect that the Holy Prophet cursed all the persons who indulge in such devices.

254. It is not right for a person to divorce his wife and then reunite with her before the expiry of the term simply to get another opportunity to torment and harass her. Therefore Allah has warned that if the husband sincerely intends to take his wife back, he should re-unite with the intention of treating her well; otherwise the best thing would be to release her in a noble way. (Please also refer to E.N. 250).

255. It means, "Do not forget the fact that Allah has appointed you to a position of the highest responsibility. He has given you the Book and taught you wisdom and entrusted you with the duty of guiding the world. You have been made the "Community of the Golden Mean" and the witnesses of virtue and truth. It does not, therefore, behove you to play with the Revelations by means of sophistry and take undue advantage of the letter of the Law and lead wicked and

unjust lives in your homes, when you are expected to show the Right Way to the world."

256. That is, "If both agree to re-marry after the expiry of the term, the relatives of the divorced woman should not prevent her from remarrying her former husband, who had divorced her once or twice but had not become re-united with her during the prescribed term. It may also mean that the husband who had divorced his wife thrice should not prevent her from marrying another person after the expiry of the prescribed term. There is nothing meaner that one should prevent his divocred wife from marrying another man just because he himself has divorced her."

257. This applies to all the cases in which the husband and the wife have separated in any manner divorce, *khula'* or judicial separation) and the child is still a suckling.

258. If the father dies, the responsibility of remunerating the mother or the wet nurse who suckles the infant lies on the guaradian just as it lay on the father.

فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْهُمَا وَ تَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا ۗ وَ اِنْ اَرَدْتُّمْ اَنْ
تَسْتَرْضِعُوْٓا اَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ اِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَّآ اٰتَيْتُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ ۗ وَ اتَّقُوا
اللّٰهَ وَ اعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ﴿٢٣٣﴾ وَ الَّذِيْنَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَ
يَذَرُوْنَ اَزْوَاجًا يَّتَرَبَّصْنَ بِاَنْفُسِهِنَّ اَرْبَعَةَ اَشْهُرٍ وَّ عَشْرًا ۚ فَاِذَا بَلَغْنَ
اَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيْمَا فَعَلْنَ فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ ۗ وَ اللّٰهُ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ﴿٢٣٤﴾ وَ لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيْمَا عَرَّضْتُمْ بِهٖ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ النِّسَآءِ
اَوْ اَكْنَنْتُمْ فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِكُمْ ۗ عَلِمَ اللّٰهُ اَنَّكُمْ سَتَذْكُرُوْنَهُنَّ وَ لٰكِنْ لَّا تُوَاعِدُوْهُنَّ
سِرًّا اِلَّآ اَنْ تَقُوْلُوْا قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوْفًا ۗ وَ لَا تَعْزِمُوْا عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ حَتّٰى يَبْلُغَ
الْكِتٰبُ اَجَلَهٗ ۗ وَ اعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوْهُ ۚ وَ اعْلَمُوْٓا
اَنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ حَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٣٥﴾ لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ اِنْ طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَآءَ مَا لَمْ تَمَسُّوْهُنَّ
اَوْ تَفْرِضُوْا لَهُنَّ فَرِيْضَةً ۖ وَّ مَتِّعُوْهُنَّ ۚ عَلَى الْمُوْسِعِ قَدَرُهٗ وَ عَلَى الْمُقْتِرِ
قَدَرُهٗ ۚ مَتَاعًۢا بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ ۚ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿٢٣٦﴾ وَ اِنْ طَلَّقْتُمُوْهُنَّ مِنْ
قَبْلِ اَنْ تَمَسُّوْهُنَّ وَ قَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيْضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ اِلَّآ اَنْ
يَّعْفُوْنَ اَوْ يَعْفُوَا الَّذِيْ بِيَدِهٖ عُقْدَةُ النِّكَاحِ ۗ وَ اَنْ تَعْفُوْٓا اَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوٰى ۗ
وَ لَا تَنْسَوُا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ﴿٢٣٧﴾ حٰفِظُوْا عَلَى
الصَّلَوٰتِ وَ الصَّلٰوةِ الْوُسْطٰى ۗ وَ قُوْمُوْا لِلّٰهِ قٰنِتِيْنَ ﴿٢٣٨﴾ فَاِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا
اَوْ رُكْبَانًا ۚ فَاِذَآ اَمِنْتُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُمْ مَّا لَمْ تَكُوْنُوْا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٢٣٩﴾
وَ الَّذِيْنَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَ يَذَرُوْنَ اَزْوَاجًا ۖ وَّصِيَّةً لِّاَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَّتَاعًا
اِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ اِخْرَاجٍ ۚ فَاِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيْ مَا فَعَلْنَ فِيْٓ

If those of you, who die, leave wives behind, they should abstain (from marriage) for four months and ten days.[259] Then when their waiting term expires, they are free to do whatever they choose for themselves, provided that it is decent; you shall not be answerable for this; Allah is fully aware of what you do. It is no offence if you make indirect proposal of marriage to widows during their waiting term or keep it concealed in your hearts: for Allah knows that you will naturally think of them. But be careful not to make any secret engagement. If you have to do anything, do it in an honourable way. And you should not settle anything finally about the marriage until the waiting term expires. Understand it well that Allah even knows what is hidden in your hearts; so fear Him. Also know that Allah is Lenient and Forgiving. 234-235

It is no sin if you divorce your wives while you have not yet touched them or fixed any dower for them. In such a case, pay them something anyhow.[260] A rich man should pay fairly according to his means and a poor man according to his resources, for this is an obligation on the righteous people. In case you fixed a dower for them and then divorced them before you touched them, you should pay half of the fixed dower. But there is no harm if the woman agrees to forego it or the man, in whose hands is the marriage tie, is generous enough (to pay the dower in full). And if you (men) act generously, it is akin to piety. Do not forget to show generosity in your dealings[261] with one another for Allah sees what you do. 236-237

Take great care of your Prayers,[262] especially of a Prayer that has excellent qualities of *Salāt*[263] and stand before Allah like devoted servants. Even if you are in danger, you must offer your Prayers anyhow — on foot or on horseback. And when you have peace again, remember Allah in the manner He has taught you, which you did not know before. 238-239

Those[264] of you, who shall die and leave wives behind them, should make a will to the effect that they should be provided with a year's maintenance and should not be turned out of their homes. But if they leave their homes of their own accord, you shall not be answerable for whatever they choose for themselves in a fair way; Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise. Likewise, the divorced women should also be given something in accordance with the known fair standard. This is an obligation upon the God-fearing people. 240-241

اَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنْ مَّعْرُوْفٍ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿٢٤٠﴾ وَلِلْمُطَلَّقٰتِ مَتَاعٌۢ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ
حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٢٤١﴾ كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿٢٤٢﴾ اَلَمْ
تَرَ اِلَى الَّذِيْنَ خَرَجُوْا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَهُمْ اُلُوْفٌ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ فَقَالَ لَهُمُ
اللّٰهُ مُوْتُوْا ۣ ثُمَّ اَحْيَاهُمْ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَذُوْ فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَ
النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿٢٤٣﴾ وَقَاتِلُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيْعٌ
عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٤٤﴾ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِيْ يُقْرِضُ اللّٰهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضٰعِفَهٗ لَهٗٓ اَضْعَافًا كَثِيْرَةً ۭ
وَاللّٰهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْصُۜطُ ۠ وَاِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُوْنَ ﴿٢٤٥﴾ اَلَمْ تَرَ اِلَى الْمَلَاِ مِنْۢ بَنِيْٓ
اِسْرَاۗءِيْلَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مُوْسٰى ۘ اِذْ قَالُوْا لِنَبِيٍّ لَّهُمُ ابْعَثْ لَنَا مَلِكًا نُّقَاتِلْ
فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۭ قَالَ هَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ اِنْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ اَلَّا تُقَاتِلُوْا ۭ
قَالُوْا وَمَا لَنَآ اَلَّا نُقَاتِلَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَقَدْ اُخْرِجْنَا مِنْ دِيَارِنَا
وَاَبْنَاۗىِٕنَا ۭ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ تَوَلَّوْا اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا مِّنْهُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌۢ
بِالظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٢٤٦﴾ وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوْتَ مَلِكًا ۭ
قَالُوْٓا اَنّٰى يَكُوْنُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ اَحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ
يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِّنَ الْمَالِ ۭ قَالَ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ اصْطَفٰىهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهٗ
بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ يُؤْتِيْ مُلْكَهٗ مَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ وَاسِعٌ
عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٤٧﴾ وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ اِنَّ اٰيَةَ مُلْكِهٖٓ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوْتُ فِيْهِ
سَكِيْنَةٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ اٰلُ مُوْسٰى وَاٰلُ هٰرُوْنَ تَحْمِلُهُ
الْمَلٰۗىِٕكَةُ ۭ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيَةً لَّكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٢٤٨﴾ فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ
طَالُوْتُ بِالْجُنُوْدِ ۙ قَالَ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ مُبْتَلِيْكُمْ بِنَهَرٍ ۚ فَمَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ

Thus Allah makes clear His commandments for you: it is expected that you will use your common sense. 242

Have[265] you ever reflected upon the case of those who fled their homes for fear of death, and they were thousands in number? So Allah said to them, "Die"; then He again gave them life.[266] Indeed Allah is bountiful to mankind, but most of the people are ungrateful. — O Muslims, fight in the way of Allah and know that Allah hears everything and knows everything. Who is there among you who will lend to Allah a good loan[267] that He may return it after multiplying it manifold? Allah alone can decrease and increase (wealth) and to Him you shall all return. 243-245

Have you also reflected upon the matter concerning the chiefs of the Israelites after (the death of) Moses? They said to their Prophet, "Appoint a king for us so that we may fight in the way of Allah."[268] The Prophet asked them, "Might it be that you will not fight, if fighting is prescribed for you?" They replied, "How can it be that we would refuse to fight in the way of Allah when we have been turned out of our homes and separated from our children?" But (in spite of this assurance) when they were enjoined to fight, they all, except a few of them, turned their backs. And Allah knows each and everyone of these transgressors. 246

Their Prophet said to them, "Allah has appointed Saul[269] to be king over you." Hearing this, they replied, "How has he been entitled to become king over us? We have a better right to kingship than he, for he does not even possess enough riches." The Prophet replied, "Allah has preferred him to you and blessed him with abundant powers of mind and body. And Allah has the power to give His kingdom to whomever He wills: Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing." Their Prophet further informed them, "The sign of his appointment as king from Allah is that during his reign you will get back the Ark, wherein are the means of your peace of mind from your Lord, and which contains the sacred relics of the family of Moses and Aaron, and which is being borne at this time by the angels.[270] Herein is a great Sign for you, if you are true believers." 247-248

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259. This prescribed term for waiting also applies to those widows who might not have had any intercourse with their husbands. The pregnant widow is,

however, an exception. Her prescribed term is her delivery whether it takes place just after the death of the husband or several months after it.

"They must abstain" implies that they must not remarry during the term, nor adorn themselves in any manner during this period. Traditions give clear instructions that widows should not wear ornaments and coloured and showy dresses, nor adorn themselves with any kind of make-up during the term. There is, however, a difference of opinion as to whether a widow should pass the term in the house of the deceased husband or not. Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, 'Uthman Ibn 'Umar, Zaid bin Thabit, Ibn Mas'ud, Umm Salāmah, Sa'id bin al-Musayyib, Ibrahim Nakha'i, Muhammad bin Sirin, and the four Imams (may Allah show mercy to all of them) are of the opinion that she should reside in the house of the deceased husband. On the contrary, Ḥaḍrat 'A'ishah, Ibn 'Abbas, Ḥaḍrat 'Ali, Jabir bin 'Abdullah, 'Ata', Ta'us, Hasan Basri, 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Aziz, and all the Zahiris are of the opinion that she is free to pass the period wherever she likes, and can also go on a journey.

260. After all some harm is done to the woman when the marital relation is broken even under such a condition. Therefore some compensation, according to one's means, must be paid.

261. That is mutual generosity in dealings is essential for the harmony and betterment of human relations. Social life can never be happy if each and every person insists on his own legal rights.

262. After enunciating rules and regulations for ensuring social welfare and for leading a civilized life, Allah has impressed the importance of the *Salāt* as a finishing touch because it alone can produce fear of Allah and feelings of virtue and piety and create the attitude of obedience to the Divine Law and keep one on the right path. None can remain firm in one's obedience to the Law of Allah without *Salāt*, for one is liable to swerve into one kind of disobedience or the other like the Jews.

263. Interpreters differ in regard to the meaning of "*Salāt-al-wusta*" but the majority of them are of the opinion that it refers to one of the five Prayers, and most of them have opined that it is the "Asr Prayer." There is, however, no definite saying of the Holy Prophet in support of any of these interpretations. Those who are in favour of the " 'Asr Prayer" infer their opinion from this Tradition: In the "Battle of the Clans," the Holy Prophet was so engaged in repelling the invasion of the enemies that he got no time to offer the " 'Asr Prayer" till sunset. Then he said, "May Allah fill their graves with fire for depriving us of our '*Salāt al-wusta*'." From this they infer that by "*Salāt al-wusta*" is meant the " 'Asr Prayer." But in my opinion what the Holy Prophet meant by

this was that they were responsible for the spiritual loss the Muslims had suffered by their inability to offer their " 'Asr Prayer" in time and with peace of mind. As the Prayer whose loss the Holy Prophet regretted happened to be the " 'Asr Prayer," the interpreters were led to conclude that the "'Asr Prayer" itself was the *Salāt al-wusta*.

The Arabic word "*wusta*" means both middle and excellent. Thus, *Salāt al-wusta* implies both the middle Prayer and also an excellent Prayer which is said in time and with full attention to Allah, that is, a Prayer which has all the excellent qualities of *Salāt*. The subsequent sentence, "Stand before Allah like obedient servants", itself supports the interpretation that it meant an excellent Prayer offered to Allah, having all the excellent qualities of *Salāt*, and not any one particular Prayer out of the five prescribed Prayers.

264. At the end of the discourse, this has been added as an appendix and supplement.

265. From here begins a new address. In it the Muslims have been exhorted to do *"Jihad," i.e.*, to exert their utmost in the Way of Allah and make monetary sacrifices for the cause. At the same time they have been warned to guard against those weaknesses that had led to the degeneration and downfall of the children of Israel. It will help understand this address, if we keep in mind the occasion of its revelation. At that time the Muslims, who had been expelled from Makkah a year or so earlier and were living as refugees at Madinah, were asking over and over again for permission to fight with the disbelievers who had been persecuting them relentlessly for years. But, when the permission they themselves had asked was given, some of them began to lose heart (Please refer to Al-Baqarah, II : 216). That is why two important events from the history of the Israelites are being related to serve as a fore-warning to the Muslims and to stimulate their zeal and courage.

266. This refers to the exodus of the children of Israel (for details please see Al-Ma'idah, V: 20-26), when they had left Egypt in large numbers and were wandering homeless in the deserts and wildernesses and were very anxious to find a home for themselves. But when inspired by Allah, the Prophet Moses ordered them to fight against the Canaanites and expel them from Palestine and conquer that territory, they showed cowardice and refused to march forward. Consequently Allah left them to wander in the land for forty years so that that generation should come to an end and a new one be brought up in the hardships of the desert. Then Allah gave them victory over the Canaanites. Probably "death and second life" refer to these two aspects of the exodus.

267. "Good loan" is that which is lent without any idea of personal gain or interest but is given with the sole intention to please Allah. Allah in His bounty credits the wealth thus spent in His Way as a loan on Himself. He promises that He will not only return the actual debt but increase it manifold, provided that it is a good loan in the real sense and is lent merely to please Him and for the sake of the objects He approves.

268. This incident has been mentioned here to fore-warn the Muslims about the hardship and trials of Jihad.

About 1000 B.C., the Amalikites tyrannized over the Israelites and usurped many parts of Palestine from them. At that time the Prophet Samuel, who was at the helm of the affairs of Israel, had grown very old. So the elders of Israel went to Samuel and said, "You are old. Now appoint a king for us to rule us and march in front of us and fight in the way of God." They asked for a king to rule them like all other nations. They made this demand because under the evil influence of the irreligious foreign rulers, they had forgotten the very distinction between "Divine Rule" and "kingship." That is why 'the thing displeased Samuel' and incurred the wrath of the Lord. Here are given some details from Chapters 7, 8, 12 of I Samuel.

"And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life ..... And it came to pass when Samuel was old, then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, and said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways; now make us a king to judge us like all the nations .... But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, "Give us a king to judge us". And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them ..... And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him of a king. And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint them captains over thousands and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields and your vineyards, and give them to his servants ..... And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vine-yard, and give to his officers and to his servants. And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day

because of your king which ye shall have chosen yourselves; and the Lord will not hear you in that day. Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles. And the Lord said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king..... (7:15, 8:4-22).

"And Samuel said unto all Israel, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice ..... and have made a king over you ..... And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the Lord your God was your king. Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the Lord hath set a king over you. If ye will fear the Lord and serve Him, and obey His voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the Lord your God: but if ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you, as it was against your fathers.....Moreover as for me God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way...But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king." (12:12-23)

From the above quotations, it is quite clear that God and His Prophet did not approve of their demand for a king. As to the question, "Why has not God condemned in the Qur'ān this demand of the elders of Israel for a king?", the answer is obvious. The story has been related here only for the benefit of the Muslims so that they may learn a lesson from this. Therefore there was no occasion for the condemnation or approval of the institution of kingship, and it would have been irrelevant to discuss whether this demand was right or wrong. Here the only object in view is to state the cause of the downfall of the Israelites, their cowardice, self-worship and lack of discipline so that these might serve as a fore-warning to the Muslims and they should avoid the nourishment of such weaknesses amongst themselves.

269. The Bible says, "Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish .....And he had a son whose name was Saul, a choice young man and a goodly person: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people. And the asses of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. And Kish said to Saul his son, Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses ..... And when they were come into the city, behold, Samuel came out against them.....And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, behold the man whom I spake to thee

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مِنِّیْٓ وَمَنْ لَّمْ یَطْعَمْهُ فَاِنَّهٗ مِنِّیْٓ اِلَّا مَنِ اغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةًۢ بِیَدِهٖ ۚ
فَشَرِبُوْا مِنْهُ اِلَّا قَلِیْلًا مِّنْهُمْ ؕ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهٗ هُوَ وَالَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مَعَهٗ ۙ
قَالُوْا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْیَوْمَ بِجَالُوْتَ وَجُنُوْدِهٖ ؕ قَالَ الَّذِیْنَ یَظُنُّوْنَ اَنَّهُمْ
مُّلٰقُوا اللّٰهِ ۙ كَمْ مِّنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِیْلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِیْرَةًۢ بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ
مَعَ الصّٰبِرِیْنَ ﴿۲۴۹﴾ وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوْا لِجَالُوْتَ وَجُنُوْدِهٖ قَالُوْا رَبَّنَآ اَفْرِغْ عَلَیْنَا
صَبْرًا وَّثَبِّتْ اَقْدَامَنَا وَانْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكٰفِرِیْنَ ﴿۲۵۰﴾ فَهَزَمُوْهُمْ بِاِذْنِ
اللّٰهِ ۙ وَقَتَلَ دَاوٗدُ جَالُوْتَ وَاٰتٰىهُ اللّٰهُ الْمُلْكَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهٗ
مِمَّا یَشَآءُ ؕ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللّٰهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ ۙ لَّفَسَدَتِ
الْاَرْضُ وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ ذُوْ فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِیْنَ ﴿۲۵۱﴾ تِلْكَ اٰیٰتُ اللّٰهِ نَتْلُوْهَا
عَلَیْكَ بِالْحَقِّ ؕ وَاِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِیْنَ ﴿۲۵۲﴾

تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ ۘ مِنْهُمْ مَّنْ كَلَّمَ اللّٰهُ وَرَفَعَ

بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجٰتٍ ؕ وَاٰتَیْنَا عِیْسَى ابْنَ مَرْیَمَ الْبَیِّنٰتِ وَاَیَّدْنٰهُ بِرُوْحِ
الْقُدُسِ ؕ وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ مَا اقْتَتَلَ الَّذِیْنَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا
جَآءَتْهُمُ الْبَیِّنٰتُ وَلٰكِنِ اخْتَلَفُوْا فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ اٰمَنَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ كَفَرَ ؕ وَ
لَوْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ مَا اقْتَتَلُوْا ۫ وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ یَفْعَلُ مَا یُرِیْدُ ﴿۲۵۳﴾ یٰۤاَیُّهَا الَّذِیْنَ
اٰمَنُوْۤا اَنْفِقُوْا مِمَّا رَزَقْنٰكُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ یَّاْتِیَ یَوْمٌ لَّا بَیْعٌ فِیْهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ
وَّلَا شَفَاعَةٌ ؕ وَالْكٰفِرُوْنَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿۲۵۴﴾ اَللّٰهُ لَاۤ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ اَلْحَیُّ الْقَیُّوْمُ ۚ
لَا تَاْخُذُهٗ سِنَةٌ وَّلَا نَوْمٌ ؕ لَهٗ مَا فِی السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِی الْاَرْضِ ؕ مَنْ
ذَا الَّذِیْ یَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهٗۤ اِلَّا بِاِذْنِهٖ ؕ یَعْلَمُ مَا بَیْنَ اَیْدِیْهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۚ

And when Saul marched out with his army, he warned: "Allah 249-251
is going to put you to a test by the side of a river: whoso drinks of its water shall cease to be my companion: he alone shall be my companion who does not quench his thirst with its water: one may, however, take a sip or so out of his hand." But inspite of this warning, they all, except a few, drank their fill of it.[271] Afterwards when Saul, and those who had believed with him, crossed the river and advanced forward, the former said to Saul, "We have no power left this day to fight against Goliath and his hosts."[272] But those who believed that one Day they shall meet Allah, declared, "It has often been that a small host has, by Allah's grace, overcome a big host: for Allah is with those who show fortitude." Accordingly, when they marched forward to fight with Goliath and his hosts, they prayed, "Our Lord, bless us with fortitude, make firm our foothold and give us victory over the unbelieving host." Consequently, by Allah's grace, they routed the unbelievers, and David killed Goliath; and Allah gave him kingship and wisdom and taught him whatever other things He willed. ... And if Allah had not been repelling one set of people by means of another, the earth[273] would have been filled with chaos.[274] But Allah is bountiful to the world (and so repels chaos in this way).

These are Allah's revelations, which We are conveying to you 252-253
accurately. And O Muhammad, most surely you are of those who have been sent as Messengers. Of these Messengers (whom We sent for the guidance of mankind), We raised some above the others in rank. Among them was one with whom Allah Himself had direct talks. There were others whom He raised high in rank in other ways. Likewise We gave clear signs to Jesus, son of Mary, and supported him with the Holy Spirit. Had Allah so willed the people who had seen clear signs would not have fought against one another after the Prophets. But (it was not Allah's will to prevent people forcibly from differences: so) they disagreed; then some of them accepted the Truth and others rejected it. If Allah had so willed they would have never fought against one another, but Allah does whatever He pleases (to fulfil His designs.)[275]

O Believers, spend of the wealth We have bestowed upon you[276] 254
(in Our way) before the Day comes when there shall be no buying and no selling: when neither friendship nor intercession will be of any

avail. Those, who adopt the way of disbelief are indeed the wrongdoers.[277]

255 Allah: the Everlasting, the Sustainer of the whole Universe; there is no god but He.[278] He does neither slumber nor sleep.[279] Whatsoever is in the heavens and in the earth is His.[280] Who is there that can intercede with Him except by His own permission.?[281] He knows what is before the people and also what is hidden from them. And they cannot comprehend anything of His knowledge save whatever He Himself pleases to reveal.[282] His Kingdom[283] spreads over the heavens and the earth and the guarding of these does not weary Him. He alone is the Supreme and the Exalted.[284]

Contd. from p.177]

off this same shall reign over my people ..... And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them into the parlour and made them sit in the chiefest place among them that were bidden which were about thirty persons ..... Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head.....and said, the Lord hath appointed thee to be captain over his inheritance ..... And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen ..... (I Samuel, chapters 9, 10).

Saul was appointed to be leader of Israel at the command of God like Aaron, David and Christ (God's peace be upon them all), but the Qur'ān or the Traditions do not say explicitly whether he was appointed as a Prophet as well. His appointment as king by God does not necessarily mean that he was also made a Prophet.

270. Though the Bible differs a little from the Qur'ān about the details of the Ark, yet we learn much from it.

The Israelites considered the Ark to be very sacred, that is the Ark of the Covenant. They believed that by means of it "God may come among us and rescue us from the power of enemies." That is why its return gave them (*shechinah*) peace of mind and courage.

The Ark contained the sacred relics of the house of Moses and Aaron. These were the fragments of the tablets given to Moses on the Mount Sinai. Besides, there was the original copy of the Torah which was written under the guidance of Moses and given to the Levites. It also contained a bottle of manna so that the future generations of Israel should be grateful to Allah for the blessing which He had bestowed upon their forefathers in the desert. Probably it also contained the staff of Moses, which was a great sign of Allah.

270a. Probably the Qur'ān refers to the incident mentioned in chapters 4, 5, 6, of I Samuel.

The Ark of the Lord was captured by the Philistines in a battle in which the Israelites were routed. The Israelites were so disheartened that they cried, "The glory is gone from Israel on account of the capture of the Ark of God." The Ark remained in the land of the Philistines for seven months but there was deadly panic in every town to which it was driven, for "God laid a heavy hand upon them there." So much so that they began to cry, "The Ark of the God of Israel must not remain amongst us any longer for His hand is severer on us." Then they decided to send it back to Israel. "They took two milch kine, and tied them to the cart. And the kine took the straight way to the way of Bethshemesh".

As the cart was driven without any driver, obviously it was being driven by the angels towards the children of Israel under the direction of God.

271. The river might have been the Jordan or some other stream or rivulet, which Saul had to cross with the army of Israel. As he knew there was very little discipline in his community, he applied this test to sift the competent from the incompetent, and the brave from the cowardly. It is obvious that those, who could not control their thirst for a little while, could not be trusted to keep discipline in the face of that enemy by whom they had previously been defeated.

As the same test was applied by Gideon before Saul, Palmer and Rodwell have come to the strange conclusion that Gideon and Saul are here (v. 249) confused. Of course, by this they wanted to show that the Qur'ān was not a revealed Book but was the invention of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). This objection is absurd on the face of it. If two similar events had happened and only one of these is mentioned in the Bible, it does not prove that the other did not happen just because it was not mentioned in it. Moreover, it has never been claimed that the Bible contains the complete history of the Israelites with its full details. The very fact that the Talmud contains many incidens which are not mentioned in the Bible is a proof thereof.

272. Probably these were the people who had shown lack of endurance by the riverside.

273. According to the Bible, David was a raw youth at that time. By chance he reached the army of Saul at the time when Goliath, the champion of the Philistines, was uttering his challenge: "I defy the force of Israel. Give me a man and let us have a fight." Hearing these words the Israelites were dismayed and daunted, but David said to Saul, "Let not my Lord's courage fail him: Your servant will go and fight the Philistines." Saul would not agree but David persisted

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وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهٖٓ اِلَّا بِمَا شَآءَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَالْاَرْضَ ۚ وَلَا يَـُٔوْدُهٗ حِفْظُهُمَا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيْمُ ﴿255﴾ لَآ اِكْرَاهَ فِى الدِّيْنِ ۙ
قَدْ تَّبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ ۚ فَمَنْ يَّكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوْتِ وَيُؤْمِنْۢ بِاللّٰهِ فَقَدِ
اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقٰى ۗ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا ۗ وَاللّٰهُ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿256﴾ اَللّٰهُ وَلِىُّ
الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۙ يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِّنَ الظُّلُمٰتِ اِلَى النُّوْرِ ۭ وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اَوْلِيٰٓـُٔهُمُ
الطَّاغُوْتُ ۙ يُخْرِجُوْنَهُمْ مِّنَ النُّوْرِ اِلَى الظُّلُمٰتِ ۭ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمْ
فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿257﴾ اَلَمْ تَرَ اِلَى الَّذِيْ حَاۗجَّ اِبْرٰهٖمَ فِيْ رَبِّهٖٓ اَنْ اٰتٰىهُ اللّٰهُ
الْمُلْكَ ۘ اِذْ قَالَ اِبْرٰهٖمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِيْ يُحْيٖ وَيُمِيْتُ ۙ قَالَ اَنَا اُحْيٖ وَاُمِيْتُ ۭ
قَالَ اِبْرٰهٖمُ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَاْتِيْ بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَاْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ
فَبُهِتَ الَّذِيْ كَفَرَ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿258﴾ اَوْ كَالَّذِيْ مَرَّ
عَلٰي قَرْيَةٍ وَّهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلٰي عُرُوْشِهَا ۚ قَالَ اَنّٰى يُحْيٖ هٰذِهِ اللّٰهُ بَعْدَ
مَوْتِهَا ۚ فَاَمَاتَهُ اللّٰهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهٗ ۭ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ ۭ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ
يَوْمًا اَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ ۭ قَالَ بَلْ لَّبِثْتَ مِائَةَ عَامٍ فَانْظُرْ اِلٰى طَعَامِكَ وَ
شَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ ۚ وَانْظُرْ اِلٰى حِمَارِكَ وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ اٰيَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَانْظُرْ
اِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنْشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوْهَا لَحْمًا ۭ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهٗ ۙ قَالَ اَعْلَمُ اَنَّ
اللّٰهَ عَلٰي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿259﴾ وَاِذْ قَالَ اِبْرٰهٖمُ رَبِّ اَرِنِيْ كَيْفَ تُحْيِ الْمَوْتٰى ۭ
قَالَ اَوَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ ۭ قَالَ بَلٰى وَلٰكِنْ لِّيَطْمَىِٕنَّ قَلْبِيْ ۭ قَالَ فَخُذْ اَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ
الطَّيْرِ فَصُرْهُنَّ اِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ اجْعَلْ عَلٰي كُلِّ جَبَلٍ مِّنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا ثُمَّ ادْعُهُنَّ
يَاْتِيْنَكَ سَعْيًا ۭ وَاعْلَمْ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿260﴾ مَثَلُ الَّذِيْنَ يُنْفِقُوْنَ

There is no compulsion and coercion in regard to religion.[285] 256-257
The right thing has been made distinct from the wrong thing: now whoever rejects *taghut*[286] and believes in Allah has taken a firm support that never gives way. And Allah (Whose support he takes) hears everything and knows everything. Allah is the Helper and Protector of those who believe in Him: He brings them out of the depths of darkness[287] into the light. As for the disbelievers, they have *taghut*[288] as their patron, who drives them out of light into the depths of darkness. These are the people who are doomed to the Fire, wherein they shall live for ever.

Have[289] you not considered the case of the person who had an 258
argument with Abraham[290] as to Whom Abraham acknowledged as his Lord?' The dispute arose because Allah had given him the kingship,[291] (which had made him arrogant). When Abraham said, "My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death," he answered, "I give life and cause death." Then Abraham said, "Well, Allah brings the sun from the east: just bring it from the west." At this the disbeliever was confounded:[292] (yet he did not believe), for Allah does not show guidance to unjust people.

Or take the case of the one who passed by a township that had 259
fallen down upon its roofs.[293] He exclaimed, "How shall Allah bring back to life this township that has become dead?"[294] At this Allah caused him to die and he lay dead for a hundred years. Then Allah brought him back to life and asked him, "How long have you lain here?" He answered, "I might have lain here for a day or a few hours." Allah said, "Nay, you have been lying here in this state for a hundred years: now, just have a look at your food and your drink; they have not become spoiled in the least. Then have a look at your ass, (and see that his very bones have become rotten) and We have done this in order to make you a Sign for the people.[295] Look, how We raise up the skeleton and set the bones (of the ass) and cover them with flesh and (put breath of life into them)." And when the Reality became manifest to him, he said, "I know that Allah has power over everything."

Call to mind the other event also, when Abraham said, "My 260
Lord, show me how Thou bringest the dead back to life?" He said, "Have you no faith in this?" Abraham humbly replied, "I do believe but I ask this to reassure my heart."[296] Allah said, "Well, take four

birds and tame them with yourself and then (cut them into pieces) and place a piece of each of them on each hill. Then call them and they will come running to you; know this for certain that Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise."[297]

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and was allowed to fight him. When Goliath saw him, he despised him for his youth and said, "Come here and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field." Then David answered, "The Eternal will deliver you into my hands so that all the world may learn that Israel has a God, till all here present, learn that the Eternal does not save by sword and spear ..... the fight is in the Eternal's hands, and He will put you in our power.' Then David slew him and became very popular among the Israelites. Saul gave his own daughter to him in marriage and after him he became the king of Israel. (For further details please refer to I Samuel, Chapters 17, 18).

274. In order to keep peace and order on the Earth, Allah allows different groups, different nations and different parties to gain and retain power to a certain limit but when they transgress that limit, He replaces them by others and breaks their power. If Allah had allowed any one party or nation to continue in power for ever, Allah's Earth would have been filled with utter confusion and disorder.

275. Naturally a question arises: Why does not then Allah will it? Why does He allow differences that sometimes result in wranglings, even fights? Is He helpless to stop these? Of course, He is All-Powerful and could have stopped these and none would have dared to swerve even the least from the Guidance He sent through His Messengers. But it is not His will to force people to follow a particular, defined fixed way, because He has sent man on the Earth for a trial. If He had taken away freedom of action from man the trial would have become meaningless. He sent His Messengers to invite the people to the Right Way and convince them by arguments and signs. The Messengers were not sent to force people to believe and submit to Allah. Differences and fights took place because the people abused the limited freedom of will and freedom of action which was given to them by Allah and then invented ways of life different from that Way which was sent down by Allah. Thus it is quite obvious that differences did not arise because Allah failed (though He willed) to force the people to choose the Right Way. Of course, Allah is able to do anything He wills.

276. Believers have been exhorted to make monetary sacrifices for the achievement of the cause they believe in.

277. "Those who adopt the way of disbelief" may either refer to those who refuse to obey the commands of Allah and consider the hoarding of wealth to

be dearer than the winning of His approval, or to those who do not believe in the Day about which warning has been given, salvation in the Hereafter through somebody's friendship or intercession.

278. Though ignorant people might make several gods and set up objects of worship, the fact remains that the whole of creation belongs to the Eternal, Who has no partner whatsoever. He is the living Allah Who sustains the whole universe. He alone is the Master of His kingdom. None else is a partner in His attributes, characteristics, powers and rights. Hence a lie is invented whenever any false god is set up beside Allah on the earth or in the heavens and a war is waged against the Truth.

279. This refutes the conception of Allah which is based on the assumption that He has weaknesses and limitations like imperfect human beings. For instance the Bible says, "And on the seventh day God ended His work which he had made: and He rested on the seventh day from all the work which He had made" (Genesis 2 : 2), and "Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine." (Psalms 78 : 65). Of course, Allah is absolutely free from such weaknesses.

280. He is the Master and Owner of the earth and the heavens and each and everything contained in them, and none else has any part or share in His Ownership, His Authority, His Kingdom, His Sovereignty and His Rule. Anyone or anything that can be conceived as god will surely be a part of the universe and every part of this universe is Allah's property and cannot, therefore, be His partner or rival.

281. This refutes the wrong notion of those who are under the delusion that saints, angels, etc., wield great influence with Allah, and they will intercede with Him and force Him to pardon them. They are being warned that no creature of His can stand before Him and intercede for others, not to speak of forcing Allah to pardon them. No prophet, no angel, and no saint will dare utter a word without the permission of the Sovereign of the universe.

282. According to the Qur'ān, it is an unpardonable sin to associate any partner or set up any rival to rank with Allah or to assume for oneself His rights or characteristics in any way whatsoever. This is called *shirk*. In the preceding verse, the Quran strikes at the very root of *shirk* by declaring that Allah's Sovereignty is unlimited and His Power is absolute. In this verse the same thing is presented from another point of view, by posing the question: How can anyone interfere in the management of the universe when none possesses that knowledge which is a pre-requisite for this? The knowledge of the angels and human beings is so imperfect that none of them can understand the system of the universe and, therefore, any

interference in its management would invariably result in chaos. Not to speak of the management of the universe, people cannot even know in what lies their own good. It is thus obvious that they should have full confidence in the Guidance of Allah Who is the real source of all knowledge and Who knows in what lies their own good.

283. The word "*kursī*" (chair) has been used here figuratively as a symbol of power and authority. Even in English the word chair is used for the seat of authority, and government.

284. This verse is known as *Āyat al-Kursī*. It gives such a perfect knowledge of Allah that has no parallel elsewhere. That is why a Tradition has declared it to be the best verse of the Qur'ān.

Here a question arises: In what connection has Allah and His attributes been mentioned in this place? In order to answer this question, we should survey the address which begins from verse 243. First of all the believers have been exhorted to exert their utmost in the Way of Allah and make sacrifice of life and property for its establishment. They have also been warned to ward off those weaknesses in which the Israelites were involved. Then it has been impressed upon them that success does not depend merely upon numbers, provisions and armaments, but upon faith, fortitude, discipline and firm determination. Then the wisdom of war as a weapon with which Allah repels one group by another has been stated; that is, if only one group or one party had been allowed to continue in power, it would have made life difficult for its rivals and opponents. Then it has been shown that Allah is not powerless to remove differences from among the people but it is not His Will to remove these forcibly. Therefore He sends His Messengers with the Truth for this purpose, but leaves the people free to accept or reject it. Again as in the beginning of this discourse, the Muslims have been enjoined to spend their wealth in the Way of Allah. Then in this verse it has been declared that inspite of the differences in the creeds and the religions of the people, the fact is that Allah sustains and controls the whole universe. Of course, it is not His Will to force the people to believe in Him, but He only warns them through His Messengers that those, who will believe in Him and sacrifice their lives and properties in His Way in order to please Him, will be gainers and those, who will disbelieve, shall be losers.

285. The word "*dīn*" implies the concept about Allah as stated in the *Āyat al-kursī* above as well as the entire way of life built on it. The verse means that the creed of Islam and its way of life cannot be thrust upon anyone forcibly. As a matter of fact, this cannot be forced upon anyone.

286. The word *taghut* literally applies to everyone who transgresses the limits. The Qur'an uses this word for one who rebels against Allah and claims himself to be the master and sovereign of His servants and forces them to become his servants.

Man's rebellion against Allah has three degrees of criminality: (1) One is *fasiq* (disobedient) if one professes to be His subject but practically acts against His commandments; (2) One is *kafir* (disbeliever) if one becomes independent of Him or owes allegiance to someone else; (3) One is *taghut* if one rebels against Allah and exerts to make His subjects subservient to himself. Such a one may be Satan or a priest or a religious or a political leader or a king or a state. Therefore no one can be a true believer of Allah unless he disowns *taghut*.

287. "Darkness" stands for the darkness of ignorance that causes one to go astray from the Right Way, and to spend all one's efforts and energies in wrong way. In contrast to this, "light" stands for the light of the Truth which enables one to see clearly the Reality and perceive the real aim of life and follow consciously and deliberately the Right Way.

288. Though *taghut* is singular in form, here it is plural in meaning, for the one who rejects Allah becomes a slave not of one but of several forms of *taghut*. One of these is Satan who goes on tempting him with many false and alluring temptations. Another is his own self that makes him a slave of passions and lusts and misleads him into crooked ways. Then there are others, his wife and children, his kith and kin, his clan and family, his friends and nation, his political and religious leaders and his government. All these are *taghut* for him and desire to make him a slave of their wishes and ambitions. And this slave of all these masters wastes his whole life in trying to accomplish the impossible feat of pleasing each and every one of them.

289. In the foregoing verse it was declared that Allah is the Helper and Protector of a believer and brings him out of darkness, and *taghut* is the helper of the unbelievers and misleads them into darkness. Now three events are cited as a proof thereof. The first is the instance of a person to whom the Truth was presented with so clear arguments that he could not find any answer against them. But in spite of this, he did not accept it because he was misled by *taghut* and so he went on wandering in the darkness. The other two instances are of those who had full confidence in Allah, so Allah not only took them out of darkness into light but also made them eye-witnesses of the unseen Reality to enable them to give testimony concerning it.

290. The person referred to is Nimrod who was the king of 'Iraq, the land of the birth of Abraham. The Bible does not mention this dispute but the Talmud

relates it in detail and its version is substantially the same as that of the Qur'ān. It says that Abraham's father was the chief officer of king Nimrod and a great favourite with his royal master. His son Abraham was a lover of the Lord from his earliest childhood. When he grew up he began to preach openly the "Oneness" of God and condemn the association of any partner or rival with Him. In order to demonstrate this, he broke the idols and his father hastened before king Nimrod and denounced Abraham, saying, "He has acted so and so; let him be brought before thee for judgement." Abraham was summoned before the king and the dispute mentioned here took place between them.

291. The point at issue in the dispute was as to whom Abraham acknowledged as his Lord — Allah or Nimrod. The dispute arose because of the arrogance of Nimrod whom Allah had given kingdom. In order to understand the true nature of the dispute the following should be kept in view :

(1) It has always been a common characteristic of all the *mushrik* societies to accept Allah as the God of gods and the Lord of lords but, at the same time, to associate other gods and lords with Him, so as not to acknowledge Him exclusively as the Lord and God and worship Him as the Deity.

(2) They have always divided Godhead into two parts — the supernatural Godhead and the sovereign Godhead. They assign to God the supernatural Godhead which controls every kind of cause that produces an effect: so they turn to Him for help in their needs and difficulties but in their ignorance they set up spirits, angels, jinns, stars and many others as partners with the Supreme God, and pray to them, worship them and present offerings to them at temples dedicated to them. As to the sovereign Godhead, which really belongs to God and entitles Him alone to prescribe the way of life and to demand obedience to His commandments and to have absolute authority over all the affairs of the world, the *mushrikin* have in every age either totally usurped this rank of Godhead from God and handed it over to royal families, priests, guides, elders of society, etc., or divided it between these gods and God. That is why the royal families have often claimed the rank of Godhead in the second sense, and in order to strengthen their claim, have declared themselves to be descendants of gods in the first sense, and the priests have always strengthened and supported them, in their evil designs of becoming gods.

(3) Nimrod claimed to be a god possessing the rank of sovereign godhead. He did not deny the existence of God nor did he claim to be the creator of the heavens and the earth nor the sustainer and ruler of the universe. He only claimed to be the absolute lord and sovereign of 'Iraq and its inhabitants. His claim was that whatever he said was law and there was none over him to

whom he might be held accountable: therefore any inhabitant of 'Iraq who did not acknowledge him exclusively as his lord was a rebel.

(4) The dispute referred to arose when Abraham declared, "I acknowledge the Lord of the universe exclusively as my Lord and God of worship and I disown categorically the lordship and godhead of everyone else." Obviously, the declaration of this creed not only struck at the root of the national religion and religious gods but at the national state and its central power, king Nimrod, who claimed to be the absolute lord of 'Iraq. That is why it was not tolerated and the Prophet Abraham was brought before Nimrod for trial as a rebel.

292. Although Abraham had made it quite clear in his very first sentence that there can be no other lord than Allah, yet Nimrod impudently tried to refute his argument. But after the second argument, Nimrod was so non-plussed that he could not find any further argument to continue the dispute, as he himself knew and acknowledged that the sun and the moon were under the command of that God Whom Abraham acknowledged as Lord. He, however, would not accept this Truth which had become quite clear even to him because to accept it meant the giving up of his claim to despotism. As the rebel within him was not ready for this, he would not come out from the darkness of self - worship into the light of the Truth, even though he was dumbfounded. If he had made Allah his patron instead of his own "self," he would have found the right guidance from Abraham's preaching.

The Talmud says that after this dispute the king sent him to prison, where he remained for ten days. Then the king and his council sentenced him to be burnt alive and cast him into the flaming furnace. This incident has been mentioned in the Qur'ān in Sūrah Al-Anbiya (XXI:51-74).

293. It is useless to form conjectures as to 'who the person and which the township was, for it is not only irrelevant but also impossible to know this. There is no mention of these things in the Qur'ān or the authentic Traditions either, and we have no other reliable source. The purpose for which the incident has been related here is that "Allah brings into light those who make Him their patron." It is, however, clear from his subsequent words that he must have been a Prophet.

294. This question did not mean that he disbelieved in Resurrection or he had any doubt about it. It simply meant that he, like other Prophets, wanted to see the Reality with his own eyes.

295. The resurrection of a person who had been dead for a hundred years was itself a living Sign for the people of his age.

296. That is, "I want that peace of mind which is gained by actual experience."

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أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنْبُلَةٍ
مِائَةُ حَبَّةٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦١﴾ الَّذِينَ
يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتْبِعُونَ مَا أَنْفَقُوا مَنًّا وَلَا أَذًى
لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٢٦٢﴾ قَوْلٌ
مَعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَا أَذًى ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٣﴾
يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُبْطِلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَىٰ كَالَّذِي يُنْفِقُ
مَالَهُ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۖ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ
عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهُ وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهُ صَلْدًا ۖ لَا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ مِمَّا
كَسَبُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٢٦٤﴾ وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ
أَمْوَالَهُمُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَتَثْبِيتًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ
أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ فَآتَتْ أُكُلَهَا ضِعْفَيْنِ ۖ فَإِنْ لَمْ يُصِبْهَا وَابِلٌ فَطَلٌّ ۗ وَاللَّهُ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٦٥﴾ أَيَوَدُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونَ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ مِنْ نَخِيلٍ وَ
أَعْنَابٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ لَهُ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ ۙ وَأَصَابَهُ
الْكِبَرُ وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَاءُ ۖ فَأَصَابَهَا إِعْصَارٌ فِيهِ نَارٌ فَاحْتَرَقَتْ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ
يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٦٦﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِنْ
طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ ۖ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ
مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُمْ بِآخِذِيهِ إِلَّا أَنْ تُغْمِضُوا فِيهِ ۚ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ
غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿٢٦٧﴾ الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ ۖ
وَاللَّهُ يَعِدُكُمْ مَغْفِرَةً مِنْهُ وَفَضْلًا ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٨﴾

The charity[298] of those who expend their wealth in the way of Allah[299] may be likened to a grain of corn, which produces seven ears and each ear yields a hundred grains. Likewise Allah develops manifold the charity of anyone He pleases, for He is All-Embracing, All-Wise.[300] Those people who expend their wealth in the way of Allah, and then do not follow up their charity with reminders of their generosity nor injure the feelings of the recipient, shall get their reward from their Lord; they will have no fear and no sorrow of any kind.[301] A kind word and forbearance is better than that charity which is followed up by insult or injury. Allah is Self-Sufficient and Forbearing.[302] O Believers, do not spoil your charity by taunts and injury to the recipients like the one who practises charity to be seen by men, while he neither believes in Allah nor in the Last Day.[303] His charity may be likened to the rainfall on a rock which had only a thin layer of soil upon it. When heavy rain fell on it, the whole of the soil washed away and the rock was left bare.[304] Such people do not gain the reward they imagine they have earned by their seeming charity: Allah does not show the Right Way to the ungrateful.[305] 261-264

In contrast to them, the charity of those, who expend their wealth sincerely with the sole desire of pleasing Allah, may be likened to a garden on a plateau. If heavy rain falls, it yields its produce two-fold: and even if there is no heavy rain but only a light shower, that too, is sufficient[306] for it: whatever you do is in the sight of Allah. 265

Would anyone of you wish that he should have a green garden of palm trees and vines, watered by canals and laden with all sorts of fruit and then it should be consumed by a fiery whirlwind at the very time when he himself has grown very old and his small children are too feeble to earn anything?[307] Thus Allah makes His revelations clear and plain to you that you may ponder over them. 266

O Believers, expend in Allah's Way the best portion of the wealth you have earned and of that We have produced for you from the earth, and do not pick out for charity those worthless things which you yourselves would only accept in disdain by connivance, if they were offered to you. Understand it well that Allah does not stand in need of anything whatsoever and has all the praise-worthy attributes.[308] Satan holds out to you the threat of poverty and prompts you to adopt a shameless niggardly conduct, but Allah holds out from Himself the 267-268

promise of pardon and bounty: Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing.

Contd. from p.189]

297. Some people have offered strange interpretations for the two above-mentioned extraordinary events. But there is no need to make far-fetched interpretations, for Allah is able to do everything He wills, as the person referred to in the first event declared. Moreover, Allah's dealings with His Prophets are of an extraordinary nature; for an ordinary believer does not need to see actually the Reality with his own eyes for the performance of his duties but it is essential for the mission of a Prophet that he should see with his own eyes those realities towards which he has to invite the people. The Prophets have to tell the people with full and firm conviction: "We have seen with our own eyes those realities about which your knowledge is based on mere guess-work. You are ignorant; but We possess knowledge; you are blind, but We possess sight." That is why the angels came to them in person so that they should see them with their own eyes. They were also shown the actual working of the system of the heavens and the earth, and Paradise and Hell and Resurrection after death. Though the Prophets believed in all these things even before their appointment as Messengers, they were made witnesses of the realities after their appointment as a special favour and distinction of prophethood. (For further reference, please see E.N.'s 17, 18, 19, 34 of Sūrah Hud, XI).

298. In the address which began with verse 243, the believers were exhorted to make sacrifices of life and property for the success of the great and noble cause they believed in. After strengthening their faith in Allah, for whose cause they were required to make sacrifices, the same theme has been resumed from this verse, and instructions have been given for the development of that attitude which is essential for making such sacrifices. It is obvious that people cannot make monetary sacrifices for a moral cause unless their economic point of view is totally changed. The materialists, who live and die in order to amass wealth and weigh everything in the scales of profit and loss, can never be expected to spend anything for higher ends. Even when they seem to be spending for some noble cause, they do so after calculating how far it would benefit their tribe, their own person or their nation. Obviously with such a mental attitude, one cannot move even a step forward in the Way of Allah. In order to uplift the Word of Allah, one has to spend one's life, energy and wealth, irrespective of any worldly gain or loss. This way requires a broad view, great courage, a big heart and, above all, a sincere desire to win Allah's approval. Moreover, it requires radical changes in the social system in order to eradicate the materialistic morality and create spiritual values instead. That is why from here on up to verse 281, instructions have been given for the creation of that kind of moral attitude.

299. All that wealth which is spent in accordance with the Divine Law and only for the achievement of Allah's approval is spent in the Way of Allah, even though it might have been spent for one's own needs or those of one's relatives or for the indigent or for public works or for the propagation of Islām or for *Jihad*.

300. As Allah has limitless resources and knows everything, one must rest assured that the more sincere one is and the deeper feelings of devotion one has in spending one's wealth in the Way of Allah, the greater will be the reward one will get from Him. One must have a firm conviction that Allah, Who produces seven hundred grains from one grain, has most surely the power of developing the charity seven hundredfold.

After stating this fact, two attributes of Allah have been specially mentioned in this connection to show that the resources of Allah are boundless and He is able to reward deeds to the extent they deserve, and to show that He knows everything and is not unaware of what is spent and with what intention. Therefore there is absolutely no risk of losing one's due reward.

301. There is neither any fear of losing their due reward nor shall there ever come a time when they will regret what they have spent.

302. This implies two things. First, Allah does not stand in need of anybody's charity, for He is Self-Sufficient. Secondly, He likes those people who are generous and large-hearted, but does not like frivolous and narrow-minded people, for He Himself is Generous, Clement and Forbearing. How, then Allah, Who bestows on the people the necessities of life without stint, and forgives and pardons them over and over again in spite of their errors, would like those who mar the self-respect of a person by sending repeated reminders of their charity and making pointed references to it even though they might have given only a farthing.

A Tradition of the Holy Prophet says that on the Day of Resurrection, Allah will neither speak a word nor even so much as look at a person who makes pointed references to the gift he gave to some one.

303. His hypocrisy itself clearly shows that he does not believe in Allah and the Hereafter. The very fact that he practises charity so as to be seen by men, shows that they are his gods (and not Allah), from whom he expects to get his reward. A hypocrite does neither expect any reward from God nor he believes that one Day all deeds will be judged and rewarded.

304. In this parable the rain is the charity. The hard barren rock on which the rain falls is the evil intention with which that charity is practised.

The thin layer of the earth is the seeming virtue which hides the evil

[Contd. on p. 196

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُّؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ اُوْتِيَ خَيْرًا
كَثِيْرًا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ اِلَّآ اُولُوا الْاَلْبَابِ ﴿269﴾ وَمَآ اَنْفَقْتُمْ مِّنْ نَّفَقَةٍ اَوْ نَذَرْتُمْ
مِّنْ نَّذْرٍ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُهٗ ۗ وَمَا لِلظّٰلِمِيْنَ مِنْ اَنْصَارٍ ﴿270﴾ اِنْ تُبْدُوا
الصَّدَقٰتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ ۚ وَاِنْ تُخْفُوْهَا وَتُؤْتُوْهَا الْفُقَرَآءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَ
يُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ مِّنْ سَيِّاٰتِكُمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ﴿271﴾ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدٰىهُمْ
وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَهْدِيْ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوْا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِاَنْفُسِكُمْ ۗ وَمَا
تُنْفِقُوْنَ اِلَّا ابْتِغَآءَ وَجْهِ اللّٰهِ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوْا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُّوَفَّ اِلَيْكُمْ وَاَنْتُمْ
لَا تُظْلَمُوْنَ ﴿272﴾ لِلْفُقَرَآءِ الَّذِيْنَ اُحْصِرُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيْعُوْنَ ضَرْبًا
فِي الْاَرْضِ ۫ يَحْسَبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ اَغْنِيَآءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ ۚ تَعْرِفُهُمْ بِسِيْمٰهُمْ ۚ لَا
يَسْـَٔلُوْنَ النَّاسَ اِلْحَافًا ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوْا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِهٖ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿273﴾
اَلَّذِيْنَ يُنْفِقُوْنَ اَمْوَالَهُمْ بِالَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَّعَلَانِيَةً فَلَهُمْ اَجْرُهُمْ
عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿274﴾ اَلَّذِيْنَ يَاْكُلُوْنَ الرِّبٰوا
لَا يَقُوْمُوْنَ اِلَّا كَمَا يَقُوْمُ الَّذِيْ يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطٰنُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ ۗ ذٰلِكَ
بِاَنَّهُمْ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبٰوا ۘ وَاَحَلَّ اللّٰهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبٰوا ۗ
فَمَنْ جَآءَهٗ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّهٖ فَانْتَهٰى فَلَهٗ مَا سَلَفَ ۗ وَاَمْرُهٗٓ اِلَى اللّٰهِ ۗ وَ
مَنْ عَادَ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿275﴾ يَمْحَقُ اللّٰهُ الرِّبٰوا وَ
يُرْبِي الصَّدَقٰتِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ اَثِيْمٍ ﴿276﴾ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا
الصّٰلِحٰتِ وَاَقَامُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتَوُا الزَّكٰوةَ لَهُمْ اَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ وَلَا
خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿277﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَذَرُوْا

الربع ٥ ٢٤ ٢٥

وقف منزل وقف لازم

He bestows wisdom upon anyone He wills, and he who is given wisdom is in fact given great wealth,[309] but only those who have common sense learn lessons from these things. 269

Surely Allah knows whatever you may have spent and whatever vow you may have made, and the wrong-doers (who spend in the way of Satan) shall have no helpers.[310] If you practise charity publicly, it is good; but if you give charity secretly to the needy, it is much better for you,[311] for this will expiate many of your sins.[312] Anyhow, Allah is well aware of whatever you do. 270-271

O Prophet, you are not responsible for their guidance; Allah Himself shows guidance to anyone He pleases. And whatever wealth you spend in charity, it is for your own good. As you spend of your wealth to win Allah's pleasure, you will be given full reward for whatever you spend and you will not be deprived in the least of your rightful due.[313] 272

Those who are engaged so much in the cause of Allah that they cannot move about in the land to earn their livelihood and are, therefore, in straitened circumstances, specially deserve help. An ignorant person would suppose them to be well off because of their self-respect; you can know their real condition from their faces, for they are not the ones who would beg of people with importunity. And Allah will surely know whatever you will spend on them.[314] 273

Those who spend their wealth secretly and openly by day and night, will have their reward with their Lord, and they have nothing to fear nor grieve. But those who devour interest[315] become like the one whom Satan has bewitched and maddened by his touch.[316] They have been condemned to this condition because they say, "Trade is just like interest",[317] whereas Allah has made trade lawful and interest unlawful.[318] Henceforth, if one abstains from taking interest after receiving this admonition from his Lord, no legal action will be taken against him regarding the interest he had devoured before; his case shall ultimately go to Allah.[319] But if one repeats the same crime after this, he shall go to Hell, where he shall abide for ever. Allah deprives interest of all blessing and develops charity;[320] and Allah does not like an ungrateful, sinful person.[321] As to those who believe and do good deeds, establish the *Salāt* and pay the *Zakat*, they will most surely have 274-277

their reward with their Lord and they will have nothing to fear nor to grieve.[322]

Contd. from p. 193]

intention. Though rainfall makes the crop grow, it does actual harm, if it falls on a rock which has only a thin layer of soil on it, by washing away even that thin soil and leaving the rock bare. In the same way, though charity has the power of developing virtue, it fails to do so, if it is not practised with good intentions. Without these things the wealth spent in charity is nothing more than so much wealth wasted like the rainfall on the rock with a thin layer of soil.

305. The word "*kafir*" here stands for the ungrateful person. Anyone who does not spend the wealth given to him by Allah in His Way and for His Pleasure but spends it to gain approbation from people, is an ungrateful wretch because he forgets the favour of Allah. It is equally true of him who spends something in the Way of Allah but at the same time does harm to the recipient. When such a person himself does not want His approval, it is not Allah's Will to show him the way of His approval.

306. "Heavy rainfall" is that charity which is practised with the best intentions and the deepest feelings of devotion, and the light shower of that charity which, though sincere, has not so much depth and intensity of feelings behind it as in the former case.

307. That is, "It is quite obvious that you do not like the earnings of your whole life to be consumed at that critical period of your old age when you need them very badly and when there is no more chance for you to earn anything afresh. Exactly the same shall be your condition when you enter into the Life-after-death without any provision for it. You shall then realize all of a sudden, like the old man of the parable, that the earnings of your whole life were left behind in the world and were as useless for you in the other world as the consumed garden to the old man. Besides this, you shall find yourself as helpless as the old man of the parable because in the Life-after-death there would be no more chance for you to earn anything for the Next World. If you do not practise charity etc., in this world in the way it has been enjoined, but spend your whole life and its energies for the interest of this world only, you will meet, at your death, with the same critical and helpless situation as the old man of the parable met. He lost his only garden, the earnings of his whole life and the support of his old age at that period of his life when he himself was unable to plant a new garden, and his children were unable to do anything because of their tender age."

308. It implies that Allah Who does not stand in need of anything or anyone enjoins the people to spend the best things in His Way not for Himself but

for their own good. As He Himself has all the praiseworthy attributes and all the excellent qualities, He does not approve of anyone who has a low character. He Himself is so generous that He is always showering His blessings on His creatures; therefore He does not love the narrow-minded, mean people who pick out worthless things for charity.

309. "*Hiknuat*" which has been translated "wisdom," stands for the knowledge with the power of discerning what is true and right. Hence anyone who has wisdom will not adopt the narrow ways of Satan but will follow the broad Way of Allah. According to the narrow-minded disciples of Satan, it is wisdom and cleverness to be parsimonious with their wealth and to be always on the look-out for acquiring more and more of it. On the contrary, those, who have been given true wisdom, consider this course to be very foolish. According to them wisdom is to spend one's wealth generously in good works after fulfilling one's own necessities of a moderate standard. It is just possible that the former may enjoy a more prosperous life here in this world but this is not the whole life. It is only a very small portion of the real life which continues after death. He, therefore, must be a big fool who gets enjoyment in this short life at the expense of happiness in the eternal life. The wise one is he who makes the best use of this short life and makes provision for the prosperity of the eternal life, even if he has been given small wealth here.

310. Allah is fully aware of the intentions and actions of everyone and knows whether one spends in the way of Allah or in the way of Satan and whether one makes a vow to Allah or to someone else. Therefore those, who spend for His cause and make vows to Him, will most surely get their rewards from Him. And those evildoers, who spend for the cause of Satan and make vows to others, shall have no helper to protect them from His punishment.

310. Allah is fully aware of the intentions and actions of everyone and knows whether one spends in the way of Allah or in the way of Satan and whether one makes a vow to Allah or to someone else. Therefore those, who spend for His cause and make vows to Him, will most surely get their rewards from Him. And those evildoers, who spend for the cause of Satan and make vows to others, shall have no helper to protect them from His punishment.

Nadhar (a vow) is a solemn promise made by a person to perform some act, or make some offering or gift etc., not binding on him, in case some wish of his should be fulfilled. If that wish is lawful and is asked of Allah and the vow is made to Allah alone, such a vow must be fulfilled as a religious duty, for it is in obedience to Allah. But if the wish is unlawful or the vow is made to someone other than Allah, then the making of the vow is sinful and its fulfilment would merit condemnation.

311. It is better to practise the obligatory charity (*Zakat*) openly and every other kind of charity secretly. The same principle applies to all other religious practices. It is better to perform the obligatory duties openly and the voluntary ones secretly.

312. It helps reform the character of a man if he performs good deeds secretly. It develops virtues in him and eradicates vices. As a result, one becomes such a favourite of Allah, that Allah in view of one's virtue and sincerity, forgives any minor sins of commission or omission He wills.

313. In this verse a misunderstanding of the Muslims has been removed. At first they hesitated to give monetary help to their non-Muslim relatives and other non-Muslims. They thought that monetary help to Muslims alone was in the Way of Allah. Here they have been told that they have not been made responsible for thrusting Guidance upon the unbelievers: their responsibility ends when they have conveyed the Truth to them. It lies with Allah to bestow (or not to bestow) the light of perception. The Muslims, therefore, should not hesitate to fulfil the needs of the non-Muslims just because they have not accepted the Guidance. If they fulfil the need of anyone to please Allah, He will give them their reward.

314. This refers to the people who devote themselves wholly to the service of Islam and are, therefore, unable to earn their livelihood. There was a regular band of such volunteers of Islām known as *Ashāb as-suffah*. They numbered about 400 and were always at the beck and call of the Holy Prophet, who had imparted to them the knowledge of Islām and trained them for its service. They imparted their acquired knowledge to others and went on different missions and expeditions under the instruction of the Holy Prophet. Obviously, such people specially deserve help because they are whole-time workers of Islām and have no spare time to earn their livelihood.

315. The Arabic word *riba'* literally means "increase in" or "addition to" anything. Technically it was applied to that additional sum which the creditor charged from the debtor at a fixed rate on the principal he lent, that is, interest. At the time of the revelation of the Qur'ān, interest was charged in several ways. For instance, a person sold something and fixed a time-limit for the payment of its price, and if the buyer failed to pay it within the fixed period, he was allowed more time but had to pay an additional sum. Or a person lent a sum of money and asked the debtor to pay it back together with an agreed additional sum of money within a fixed period. Or a rate of interest was fixed for a specific period and if the principal along with the interest was not paid within that period, the rate of interest was enhanced for the extended period, and so on.

316. The Qur'ân likens the money-lender to a madman. Just as a madman loses his sense on account of his disordered intellect, so the money-lender is so mad for money-making that he divorces himself from common sense. He is so senselessly foolish and impudent that he does not mind how his selfishness and greed are cutting at the very root of human love, brotherhood and fellow-feeling, and destroying the common good of mankind. He does not care at all that he is gaining prosperity at the expense of many. That is how he behaves like a madman in this world. In the next world he will rise like a madman at the time of Resurrection, for, in the Hereafter a person will rise in the same condition in which he dies here.

317. They based their vice on a wrong theory and did not see the fundamental difference between profit and interest. They argued like this: When profit on capital is lawful in trade, why should the interest on money invested in loans be unlawful? And the Arab money-lenders were not alone in arguing like this; the bankers and money-lenders of today also put forward similar arguments for charging interest. They argue that a person, who lends a sum of money to another, could himself make profit from it and that the debtor actually does invest it in a profitable business. Why should not the creditor then get a portion of that profit from the debtor for his productive credit? However, what they forget is that *there is no business in the whole world where there is a fixed and guaranteed profit without any risk.* In trade, commerce, industry, agriculture etc., one has to spend both labour and capital and at the same time one has to face risks, without any guarantee of a fixed profit. Let us for the present leave aside the case of the debtor who borrows money for consumption and not for production, and also the issue of the rate of interest. Let us compare the case of the money-lender who lends money at a moderate rate of interest for profitable business with the case of those engaged in other kinds of business. They devote their whole time, labour, talent and invest their own capital, etc., and work day and night so that their business may become profitable by virtue of their own efforts. But even then they are not guaranteed any fixed profit, and have to bear all the risks. On the contrary, the money-lender, who lends only his capital, goes on receiving a fixed amount of profit without any risk whatsoever. By what reasoning and on what principles of logic, justice and economics is it right for him to receive a fixed amount of profit? How can one be justified in lending on a fixed rate of interest to a factory a sum of money today for twenty years, when none can say what rise or fall in price may take place during these twenty years? And how is the subscriber to a war loan justified in charging interest at a fixed rate for a full century, and that too, from his own nation, whereas the whole nation has to face risks, bear losses and make sacrifices?

318. The fundamental difference between profit and interest that produces different moral and economic results is this :

(1) The settlement of profit in trade between the buyer and the seller is made on equal terms. The buyer purchases the article he needs and the seller gets profit for the time, labour and brains he employs in providing that article to the buyer. In contrast, in the case of interest, the debtor cannot settle the transaction on equal terms with the creditor because of his weaker position. As far as the money lender is concerned, he gets that fixed sum of interest which he considers his profit. If the debtor spends the borrowed money in fulfilling his personal needs, the time factor definitely does not bring any profit at all. And if he invests that money in trade, commerce, industry, agriculture, etc., then there are equal chances of profit or loss. Thus lending money at interest might bring a guaranteed and fixed profit to one party and loss to the other, or a guaranteed and fixed profit to one party and an uncertain and indefinite profit to the other.

(2) The trader charges his profit, however high it may be, once for all but the money-lender goes on charging interest over and over again and it goes on increasing with the passage of time. The profit which the debtor makes on the money of the creditor, however large it may be, has after all its own limits, but there is no limit to the interest the creditor may charge on his money. He may, as sometimes it actually happens, receive all the earnings of the debtor, nay, may even deprive him of all the means of livelihood or of the articles of his personal use and still might have the same amount of debt against him that was at the time of borrowing.

(3) The transaction in trade comes to an end as soon as the article and its price change hands. After this the buyer is not required to return anything to the seller. As regards the rent of furniture, house, land, etc. the lent thing is not itself spent up but is returned to the owner after the term. But in the case of the principal the debtor has to spend it first and then to reproduce it and return it to the creditor along with its interest. Thus the debtor runs a double risk; he has to reproduce the principal and also to produce its interest.

(4) One engaged in trade, industry, agriculture, etc., earns profit by spending time, labour and intelligence but the money-lender becomes the stronger partner in the earnings of the debtor without any risk or labour on his part simply because he invests the money which is over and above his need. He is a partner only to the extent that he is entitled to a fixed guaranteed interest, irrespective of whether there is any profit at all or how much, or whether there is even a loss.

From the above it becomes clear that even from the economic point of view, trade helps construct society but interest leads to ruin. As for the moral point of view, interest, by its very nature, creates parsimony, selfishness, cruelty, hard-heartedness, money-worship, etc., and kills the spirit of fellow-feeling and co-

operation. It is, therefore, ruinous for society both morally and economically. As to the question what should one do with the money for which one has no use, the answer is that one may invest it in commerce, industry, etc., on the basis of partnership and share profits and losses alike.

319. This allowance applies only to the legal aspect of the interest which had been taken before the revelation of this verse about prohibition and does not mean that the income from that interest had also been made lawful. From the very wording of the verse, it is clear that the case will go to Allah for decision and that it has not been pardoned outright by Allah. In order to avoid endless litigation on this account, it has been declared that no legal demand for its return should be made. But from the moral point of view, it remains unclean and one who has taken it must do his best to cleanse himself of it. He should abstain from spending it on himself and try his best to find out the people from whom he received it and return it to them. In case he is unable to locate or find out anyone of those people, he should spend the unclean and unlawful wealth on social welfare. This is the only way in which he can save himself from the punishment of Allah Who will decide his case on the Day of Judgement. As to the person who goes on enjoying this unlawful wealth, he may be liable to punishment even for his money-lending in the past.

320. This is true from the social, economic, moral and spiritual points of view. Though apparently interest enriches and charity impoverishes, it is really just the opposite of it. According to the law of Allah, interest is, in its very nature, a hindrance to the social, economic, moral and spiritual progress and charity (including a loan without interest) helps their development.

If we look at interest from the moral and spiritual points of view, we see clearly that it is based on greed, selfishness, parsimony, narrow-mindedness, hard-heartedness and the like and nurtures the same evils in the money-lender. On the other hand, charity is based on generosity, sympathy, broad-mindedness, large-heartedness and the like and develops the same high qualities. Can anyone deny that these qualities are far better than the former?

From the social point of view, even a little thinking will show that a society can never become strong and stable if its individual members base their mutual dealings on selfishness and if one is not willing to help the other without self-interest. If the rich people believe that the poor people exist merely to afford them an opportunity for exploitation, there will be a clash of interest which will result in the disintegration of society. If other factors also help this evil state of affairs, these will surely produce class struggle. On the other hand, if the individual members of a society base their dealings on mutual sympathy and treat each other with generosity, they will most surely strengthen it. If everyone tries to

help the other in need, and if the "haves" treat the "havenots" with sympathy or at least with justice, mutual love and fellow-feeling will develop in society and it will become strong and stable. Obviously, its progress will be accelerated by mutual co-operation and fellow-feeling.

Now let us consider interest from the economic point of view. Loans are of two kinds. The consumptive loan is borrowed by the helpless needy persons for their personal needs and the economic loan is taken by businessmen for trade, commerce, industry, agriculture, etc. As to the first kind of loan, everyone knows that interest on it produces ruinous results. In every country the money-lenders and bankers are sucking the blood of the labourers, peasants and the common poor, and making their condition miserable. The interest charges render the payment of debt almost impossible for such people and they have to borrow one loan after the other to get out of this mess. Even after paying interest equal to many times the original principal, the principal still remains as it was before. The major portion of the income of the debtor is taken away by the money-lender and the poor debtor finds himself unable to make both ends meet. Naturally this kills the interest of the labourers in their work. When the fruit of their labour is taken away by others, they cannot put their whole heart into their work. More than that: when worry, anxiety, poor food, etc., spoil their health, they cannot afford even to buy the necessary medicine for want of money. Thus money-lending leads to the fattening and battening of a few at the expenses of the blood-sucking of the majority and results in the general deterioration of the nation. The inefficiency caused in their way lowers the quality and standard of national production. In the end the blood-suckers themselves fall a prey to their own iniquity. When the suppressed anger and hatred of the depressed people engendered by the selfishness of the cruel money-lenders, bursts out into a bloody revolution, it sweeps away their honour and lives along with their ill-gotten wealth.

As to the fixed interest on economic loans, three out of the many evils are given below :

(1) Those concerns that cannot pay an interest higher than or equal to the market rate cannot draw in capital howsoever useful they may be for the nation. All the available money flows into those channels of commerce and industry which can bring interest equal to or greater than the market rate of interest, howsoever harmful or ruinous they might be from the national point of view.

(2) There is no business — commercial, industrial, agricultural — that can guarantee a fixed and uniform rate of profit, say five, six or ten per cent or more under all circumstances. Not to speak of such a guarantee, there cannot be any guarantee against loss in any business. Therefore, the business which borrows capital at a fixed rate of interest can never be free from risk or loss.

(3) As the money-lender himself is not directly a partner in the profit or the loss of the business but keeps in view only his guaranteed fixed interest, he is not interested in its welfare. His only concern is his own interest; therefore he very selfishly tries to withdraw and withhold his money whenever he has even the slightest fear of a slump in the market. In this way he creates panic by his selfishness and paves the way for a further crisis and when there is already a crisis, he accelerates it into a disaster.

The above mentioned three evils of interest are so obvious that they are well known to everyone who knows even the ABC of economics. Can then anyone deny the truth of the natural law enunciated by Allah that interest does not increase but decreases the national economic wealth?

Now let us consider charity from the economic point of view. If the well-to-do people of a society spend money liberally in buying their own necessities of life and those of their dependents and distribute a part of their wealth among the needy to enable them to buy their necessities of life, or if they lend it to businessmen without interest, or invest it in business on the basis of partnership, or lend it without interest to their government for national service, then obviously, commerce, industry, agriculture, etc., will thrive to a very high standard. The standard of national prosperity will rise higher and higher and the production of its wealth will become larger as compared with the country where interest is lawful. Thus it is clear that interest hinders the progress of a nation and charity helps its development.

321. The money-lender is no doubt an ungrateful wretch. As a grateful servant of Allah, Who gives him spare money, the least he ought to do is to lend it to his other servants without interest. And if, instead of this, he uses the bounty of Allah to exploit His other servants who are getting less than he, he becomes not only ungrateful but also cruel and wicked.

322. In this passage Allah has presented two characters for contrast. One is the selfish worshipper of wealth, the Shylock, who, unmindful of Allah and His creatures, is engaged day and night in amassing and hoarding wealth. The other is the worshipper of Allah, the generous and sympathetic person who observes the rights of Allah and His creatures; who earns wealth and spends it on his ownself and on others and in doing good works. Allah disapproves of the first type of people because they cannot build any good and stable society : nay, they even make themselves and others miserable in this world, and they shall meet with grief, sorrow and affliction in the Hereafter. In contrast to this, Allah approves of the second type of people for they help build a good and stable society and achieve real success. They have also peace of mind in this world and will be blessed with all kinds of heavenly pleasures in the Hereafter. *[Contd. on p.206*

مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبٰوٓا اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿278﴾ فَاِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوْا فَاْذَنُوْا بِحَرْبٍ
مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ ۚ وَاِنْ تُبْتُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُءُوْسُ اَمْوَالِكُمْ ۚ لَا تَظْلِمُوْنَ وَلَا
تُظْلَمُوْنَ ﴿279﴾ وَاِنْ كَانَ ذُوْ عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ اِلٰى مَيْسَرَةٍ ۭ وَاَنْ تَصَدَّقُوْا خَيْرٌ
لَّكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿280﴾ وَاتَّقُوْا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُوْنَ فِيْهِ اِلَى اللّٰهِ ۣ ثُمَّ تُوَفّٰى
كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُوْنَ ﴿281﴾ ۩ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ
بِدَيْنٍ اِلٰٓى اَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاكْتُبُوْهُ ۭ وَلْيَكْتُبْ بَّيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌۢ بِالْعَدْلِ ۠ وَلَا
يَاْبَ كَاتِبٌ اَنْ يَّكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللّٰهُ فَلْيَكْتُبْ ۚ وَلْيُمْلِلِ الَّذِيْ عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ
وَلْيَتَّقِ اللّٰهَ رَبَّهٗ وَلَا يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ شَيْـــًٔا ۭ فَاِنْ كَانَ الَّذِيْ عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ
سَفِيْهًا اَوْ ضَعِيْفًا اَوْ لَا يَسْتَطِيْعُ اَنْ يُّمِلَّ هُوَ فَلْيُمْلِلْ وَلِيُّهٗ بِالْعَدْلِ ۭ وَ
اسْتَشْهِدُوْا شَهِيْدَيْنِ مِنْ رِّجَالِكُمْ ۚ فَاِنْ لَّمْ يَكُوْنَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَّامْرَاَتٰنِ
مِمَّنْ تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَاۗءِ اَنْ تَضِلَّ اِحْدٰىهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ اِحْدٰىهُمَا الْاُخْرٰى ۭ
وَلَا يَاْبَ الشُّهَدَاۗءُ اِذَا مَا دُعُوْا ۭ وَلَا تَسْـَٔـــُٔوْٓا اَنْ تَكْتُبُوْهُ صَغِيْرًا اَوْ كَبِيْرًا
اِلٰٓى اَجَلِهٖ ۭ ذٰلِكُمْ اَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ وَاَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَادَةِ وَاَدْنٰٓى اَلَّا تَرْتَابُوْٓا اِلَّآ
اَنْ تَكُوْنَ تِجَارَةً حَاضِرَةً تُدِيْرُوْنَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ اَلَّا تَكْتُبُوْهَا ۭ
وَاَشْهِدُوْٓا اِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ ۠ وَلَا يُضَاۗرَّ كَاتِبٌ وَّلَا شَهِيْدٌ ۭ وَاِنْ تَفْعَلُوْا
فَاِنَّهٗ فُسُوْقٌۢ بِكُمْ ۭ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۭ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللّٰهُ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿282﴾ ۩
وَاِنْ كُنْتُمْ عَلٰي سَفَرٍ وَّلَمْ تَجِدُوْا كَاتِبًا فَرِهٰنٌ مَّقْبُوْضَةٌ ۭ فَاِنْ اَمِنَ
بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا فَلْيُؤَدِّ الَّذِي اؤْتُمِنَ اَمَانَتَهٗ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللّٰهَ رَبَّهٗ ۭ وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا
الشَّهَادَةَ ۭ وَمَنْ يَّكْتُمْهَا فَاِنَّهٗٓ اٰثِمٌ قَلْبُهٗ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿283﴾ ۩

O Believers, fear Allah and give up that interest which is still due to you, if you are true Believers; but if you do not do so, then you are warned of the declaration of war against you by Allah and His Messenger.[323] If, however, you repent even now (and forego interest), you are entitled to your principal; do no wrong, and no wrong will be done to you. If your debtor be in straitened circumstances, give him time till his monetary condition becomes better. But if you remit the debt by way of charity, it would be better for you, if you only knew it.[324] Guard against the disgrace and misery of the Day when you shall return to Allah: there everyone shall be paid in full for the good or evil one has earned and none shall be wronged. 278-281

O Believers, when you contract a debt for a fixed[325] term, you should put it in writing.[326] Let a scribe write with equity the document for the parties. The scribe whom Allah has given the gift of literacy should not refuse to write. Let him write and let the one under obligation (the debtor) dictate, and he should fear Allah, his Lord, and should not diminish from or add anything to the terms which have been settled. But if the borrower be of low understanding or weak or unable to dictate (for any reason), then let the guardian of his interests dictate it with equity. And let two men from among you[327] bear witness to all such documents. But if two men be not available, there should be one man and two women to bear witness so that if one of the women forgets (anything), the other may remind her. The witnesses should be from among such people whom you approve of as witnesses.[328] When the witnesses are asked to testify, they should not refuse to do so. Do not neglect to reduce to writing your transaction for a specified term, whether it be big or small. Allah considers this more just for you, for it facilitates the establishment of evidence and lessens doubts and suspicions. Of course, there is no harm if you do not put in writing the common transactions you conclude daily on the spot,[329] but in case of commercial transactions you should have witnesses. The scribe and the witnesses should not be harassed:[330] if you do so, you shall be guilty of sin. You should guard against the wrath of Allah; He gives you the knowledge of the right way for Allah has the knowledge of everything. 282

If you are on a journey and cannot find a scribe to write the document, then transact your business on the security of a pledge in hand.[331] And, if any one transacts a piece of business with another 283

merely on trust, then the one who is trusted should fulfil his trust and fear Allah, his Lord. And never conceal evidence[332] for he who conceals it, has a sinful heart: Allah knows everything that you do.

Contd. from p. 203]

323. This verse was revealed after the conquest of Makkah, but was inserted here because it also deals with interest. Even before its revelation, interest was regarded as a hateful thing though it had not yet been legally forbidden. But after its revelation, money-lending on interest became a criminal offence in the Islāmic State. Those clans who carried on this business in Arabia, were duly warned to give it up for otherwise a war would be declared against them. When the Christians of Najran were granted autonomy within the Islāmic State, it was specified in the treaty that if they continued their money-lending business, the treaty would come to an end and there would be a state of war between the parties.

From the concluding portion of this verse, Ibn 'Abbas, Hasan Basri, Ibn Sirin and Rubai'-bin-Anas have concluded that the one who takes interest in the Islāmic State should be warned to repent of it, and if he does not give it up, he should be put to death. But the other jurists are of the opinion that he should be put in prison and kept there until he undertakes to give up this business.

324. This verse empowers an Islāmic court of law to compel the creditors to give more time to the debtors for the payment of debts, if they are in such straitened circumstances that they cannot pay back their debts. Under certain circumstances, the court is entitled to write off the debt altogether or a part of it. A Tradition says that a man suffered loss in his business and came heavily under debt. When his case was taken to the Holy Prophet, he made an appeal to the people to help him out of it. Accordingly, the people made monetary contributions, but even then he could not clear all his debts. Then the Holy Prophet addressed the creditors and told them that they would have to be satisfied with whatever was collected for the payment of their debts. The jurists have explained that the house in which a man lives, his utensils, clothes and tools of trade can in no case be confiscated.

325. From this it is deduced that the term for a debt must be specified.

326. This warns against a common practice: friends and relatives do not put debt agreements into formal writing, for such a thing, according to them, shows lack of trust. Allah admonishes that agreements concerning debt and business should be recorded and testified by witnesses in order to keep the affairs of the people clean. A Tradition of the Holy Prophet says that three kinds of the people cry out to Allah for help but are not answered: first, those who have ill tempered wives but do not divorce them; second, those who are entrusted with the

property of orphans but return it to them before they attain maturity; third, those who lend money to others without any document or evidence.

327. "From among you": from among the Muslims. Imam Abu Hanifah, holds the opinion that the non-Muslims also can be made the witnesses.

328. As the establishment of the truth of a case depends to a great degree on the reliability of witnesses, a very high standard of qualification is demanded of them. Only those persons who are known to lead respectable lives and bear good moral character and are honest should be made the witnesses.

329. Even in the case of those transactions which are carried out on the spot in everyday business, it is better to record them; nevertheless there is no harm if commercial transactions carried on daily between neighbouring traders are not recorded.

330. It implies two things. No one should be forced to become a scribe or a witness against his will, and no one should harass the scribe or the witness just because he gives true evidence against the interests of a party.

331. It does not mean that a pledge may be held on security only while on a journey. It has been specially mentioned in this connection because such a condition generally occurs on a journey. Moreover, inability to get a scribe is not an essential condition for holding something as a pledge. If a needy person cannot obtain a debt unless he delivers something as security for it, he is allowed to do so. The Qur'ān deliberately omits the mention of this latter condition, because it intends to teach generosity to the Believers. It is obviously below the dignity of a man of high character not to lend money to a needy person without having a pledge in hand. It is, however, understood that if the pledge is productive, the creditor should keep a regular account of the produce and deduct it from the debt; otherwise any profit drawn from the pledged property would be interest. In this connection, one should also know that the only object in view of holding a pledge is the security of the repayment of the debt and it does not entitle the creditor in any way to make profit out of it. For instance, if a creditor himself lives in the house which he holds as a pledge for his debt or if he lets it to someone else, he in fact is guilty of taking interest, if he does not credit the rent of the house to the debtor, for there is no difference between taking direct interest on a debt or earning money from it or making use of the property delivered as a pledge. The creditor, however, may benefit from the milk of a pledged head of cattle, or may ride or carry burden on a horse, camel, etc., because that would be the compensation for the fodder given to them.

[Contd. on page .. 209

لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۭ وَاِنْ تُبْدُوْا مَا فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِكُمْ اَوْ تُخْفُوْهُ
يُحَاسِبْكُمْ بِهِ اللّٰهُ ۭ فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰي كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ۝ اٰمَنَ الرَّسُوْلُ بِمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَّبِّهٖ وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۭ كُلٌّ
اٰمَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلٰۗىِٕكَتِهٖ وَكُتُبِهٖ وَرُسُلِهٖ ۣ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِّنْ رُّسُلِهٖ ۣ
وَقَالُوْا سَمِعْنَا وَاَطَعْنَا ۡ غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَاِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيْرُ ۝ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللّٰهُ
نَفْسًا اِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۭ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ ۭ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَآ
اِنْ نَّسِيْنَآ اَوْ اَخْطَاْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَآ اِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهٗ عَلَي الَّذِيْنَ
مِنْ قَبْلِنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهٖ ۚ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا ۡ
وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ۡ وَارْحَمْنَا ۡ اَنْتَ مَوْلٰىنَا فَانْصُرْنَا عَلَي الْقَوْمِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ۝



To Allah belongs whatever[333] is in the heavens and the earth.[334] 284
Allah will call you to account for what is in your minds whether you disclose it or hide[335] it. He, however, had full authority to pardon or punish anyone He pleases, for Allah has complete power over everything.[336]

The Messenger has believed in the Guidance which has been 285
sent down to him from his Lord, and those who believe in the Messenger have also sincerely accepted the same. They all believe in Allah, His Angels, His Books and Messengers. And they say, "We do not discriminate against any of His Messengers. We have heard the Message and submitted to it. Our Lord, we look up to You for forgiveness, for to You we shall all return."[337]

Allah does not burden any human being with a responsibility 286
heavier than he can bear.[338] Everyone will enjoy the fruit of the good that one has earned and shall suffer for the evil that one has committed.[339] (O Believers, pray like this to Allah:) "Our Lord, take us not to task if we forget and lapse into error inadvertently. Lord! lay not on us the kind of burdens that You had lain on the people before us.[340] Lord, lay not on us the kind of burden that we have not the strength to bear.[341] Be kind to us, forgive us and show mercy to us. You are our Protector : help us against the disbelievers."[342]

Contd. from p. 207]

332. "Concealing of evidence" applies both to the evasion of evidence and to the concealment of the true facts while giving evidence.

333. In the concluding portion of the *Sūrah*, the basic creeds of Islām have been stated just as they were stated at its beginning. Therefore it will be useful to compare verses 284-285 with vv. 1-4.

334. This is the first article of Faith. The acceptance of the fact that Allah is the Master of the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, leaves no alternative for man but to submit to Him.

335. In this sentence two more articles of Faith have been stated. First, every person is individually responsible and accountable to Allah for his actions. Second, the Sovereign, to whom man is accountable for his actions, has full knowledge of what is hidden and what is open; He even knows those intentions and thoughts that are hidden in the heart.

336. It means that Allah is the absolute Sovereign and not a constitutional ruler. His powers are not bound by any law so as to force Him to act in accordance with it. He is the sole Master and has full authority to punish anyone or to forgive anyone He wills.

337. In this verse, the basic articles of Faith have been restated briefly. Belief in Allah, His Angels, His Books and in all of His Messengers without exception and discrimination against any and in the accountability to Him at the end of this life are the five basic articles of Faith. After the acceptance of these, the attitude for a Muslim is to submit obediently to each and every commandment of Allah. At the same time, he should not become vain on account of his good acts but should pray to Allah to forgive and show forbearance to him.

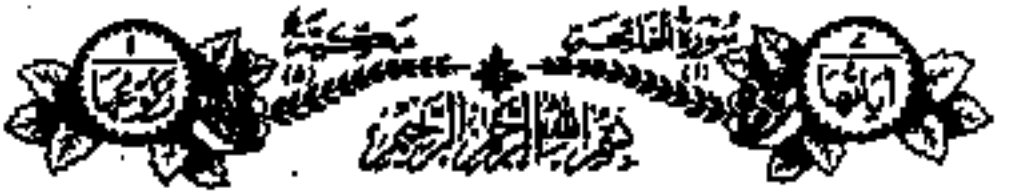
338. That is, "Allah will not call to account anyone for not doing something which he could not possibly do: nor will He punish him because he did not abstain from a thing, when he could not possibly abstain from it." It must, however, be clearly understood that an individual himself is not his own judge to decide what he can do and what he cannot do. It is Allah, Who will decide what a certain person could do and what he could not do.

339. This is the other general principle of the law. Both the rewards and the punishments are really the results and consequences of the acts and deeds of every individual. One will get a reward only for the good deed one has himself done and not for the good acts of someone else. It must, however, be noted that if someone has done some good act which goes on producing good results long after his death, all those acts will also be put to his credit in his balance sheet as long as they last. In the same way, if someone has done some evil, which goes on producing evil results long after one's death, all those also will be put against one's account as long as they last. But all these results, both good and bad, will be the consequences of one's own deeds. In short, a person shall be rewarded or punished only for that thing to which he himself contributed intentionally and actually. There is no transfer of accounts in the Divine Law of Retribution.

340. That is, "O Lord, save and protect us from such trials, persecutions and obstacles as were encountered by those who went Your way before us." Although it is the law of Allah that those, who make up their minds to follow the way of Truth, must undergo hard trials and suffer from cruel persecutions, a Believer should pray to Allah to make the way easy for him and should face them with courage when he actually meets with them.

341. That is, "Lay on us only that much burden of troubles and tribulations that we can bear and put us only to those trials that we can endure, lest we should fail to bear them and swerve from the Right Path."

342. In order to understand the true spirit of this prayer, it should be kept in view that these verses were revealed on the occasion of the Mi'raj (Ascension to Heaven) of the Holy Prophet about a year before his migration to Madinah. At that time the struggle between Islām and *kufr* had reached its climax and the persecution of the Believers was at its worst. And this was not confined to Makkah alone: there was no place in the whole of Arabia where a Muslim was allowed to live in peace. It was to cope with these circumstances that the Muslims were taught to offer this prayer to Allah. It is self-evident that when the Master Himself teaches the servant the way of begging from Him, the servant gets the conviction that his request will be granted. That is why this prayer filled the Muslims with extraordinary courage and brought peace of mind to them in the hour of their worst persecution. Moreover, this prayer taught them to keep their passions under control and within the limits contained in this prayer and not to allow them to turn into wrong channels. That is why it is free from any kind of bitterness against their enemies, and there is not any tinge in it of revenge or of worldliness. This was urgently needed at that time because the Muslims were undergoing greater hardships and monetary losses and suffering untold cruelties and were pressed hard both physically and economically. Incidentally, the contrast between the high ideals contained in their prayer and the persecution which the Believers were suffering at that time brings out clearly the high standard of the spiritual and moral training they were receiving even at that critical time. And that is the high standard of morality that has been laid down for every true believer to attain.



اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۙ﴿۱﴾ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۙ﴿۲﴾ مٰلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ ؕ﴿۳﴾
اِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَ اِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِيْنُ ؕ﴿۴﴾ اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيْمَ ۙ﴿۵﴾ صِرَاطَ
الَّذِيْنَ اَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۙ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوْبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَ لَا الضَّآلِّيْنَ ﴿۷﴾ ع

I

AL-FĀTIHAH

اَلْفَاتِحَة

Verses: 7 *Revealed at Makkah*

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.[1]

1-3 Praise is only for Allah,[2] the Lord of the Universe,[3] the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful,[4] the Master of the Day of Judgement.[5]

4-7 Thee alone we worship[6] and to Thee alone we pray for help.[7] Show us the straight way,[8] the way of those whom Thou hast blessed[9]; who have not incurred Thy wrath, nor gone astray.

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1. Islamic culture requires a man to commence everything with the name of Allah. If this is done consciously and sincerely, it will surely produce three good results. First, it will keep him away from evil, because the very name of Allah will impel him to consider whether he is justified in associating His name with a wrong deed or an evil intention. Secondly, the very mention of the name of Allah will create in him the right attitude of mind and direct him to the right direction. Thirdly, he will receive Allah's help and blessing and will be protected from the temptations of Satan, for Allah turns to a man when he turns to Him.

2. It has been stated in the Introduction to this Sūrah that *Al-Fātihah* is a prayer. It begins with the praise of Allah to Whom it is addressed in order to teach us the right way of making a supplication. We should not put forward our request bluntly and abruptly without an appropriate introduction. The right way is to acknowledge the excellences and the favours and the high position of the One to Whom we address our prayer. That is why we begin our prayer with the praise of Allah, for He is the perfection of all excellences and is also our Benefactor. We pay homage to Allah to show that we sincerely acknowledge His excellences and also are grateful to Him for His countless favours.

It should also be noted that not only Praise is for Allah but also Praise is only for Allah. This distinction is very important because it cuts at the root of the worship of any of His creation. As none of them is worthy of praise, none is worthy of worship. No man, no angel, no prophet, no so-called god, no star, no idol, in short, none of His creation inherently possesses any good quality. If one has any, it is given by Allah. Hence the Creator of these qualities alone deserves devotion, worship, gratitude, and none of His creation.

3. The word *Rab* which has been translated into 'Lord' stands for (a) Master and Owner, (b) Sustainer, Provider and Guardian, (c) Sovereign, Ruler, Administrator and Organiser. Allah is the Lord of the Universe in all these senses.

4. Although the Arabic word *Rahmān* itself is in the superlative form and denotes the attributes of beneficence and mercy in the highest degree, even this word fails to express the boundless extent of these attributes of Allah. Hence another word *Rahim of* the same root has been added to make up for the deficiency.

5. After saying that Allah is Beneficent and Merciful, it has immediately been added that He is the Master of the Day of Judgement, so that the qualities of mercy and kindness might not mislead anyone into forgetting that on that Day He will gather together all human beings from the first to the last and require each and every one to give an account of all of one's acts to Him. A Muslim should, therefore, always keep in view the fact that Allah is not only Merciful, but He is also Just. He has, however, full authority to pardon or punish anyone He pleases, for He has complete power over everything. Therefore we should have full conviction that it lies absolutely in His power to make our end happy or sorrowful.

6. The Arabic word *ibādāt* is used in three senses: (a)worship and devotion, (b) submission and obedience, (c) subjection and servitude. Here it implies all the three, that is, We are Thy worshippers, Thy subjects and Thy slaves and We keep these relations with Thee and Thee alone and "We make none else the object of our worship in all the three senses."

7. It means, We ask for Thy help because we know that Thou art the Lord of the whole Universe and Thou hast all powers and Thou art the Master of every thing. Therefore we turn to Thee for help for the fulfilment of our needs and requirements.

8. That is, "Show us that way which may lead us aright in every walk of life and keep us absolutely free from errors and evil consequences and bring us success in the end."

This is the request which the servant of Allah makes to Him when he begins the study of the Qur'ān. He prays to Him to guide him in every walk of life and save him from the labyrinths of doubt and uncertainty, which result from the lack of true knowledge. The servant also requests the Master to show him the right and the straight way of life from among the many by-paths and crooked ways.

9. The straight way for which we are praying is the way which has always been followed by the people favoured by Thee and which has always brought Thy favours and blessings.

10. This is to show that the favoured people are not those who go astray and incur the wrath of Allah, though apparently they might be enjoying the transitory good things of life. The really favoured people are those who receive blessings on account of their righteous living. From this it also becomes clear that by favours are meant those real and permanent rewards, which result from righteous living and from winning the pleasure of Allah, and not those transitory good things of life which have been enjoyed even by the tyrants and worshippers of mammon and which are being enjoyed even today by all sorts of evildoers who have gone astray from the straight way.



III

ĀL-I-'IMRĀN

آلِ عِمرٰن

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

III
ĀL-I-'IMRĀN

آلِ عِمران

INTRODUCTION

This Sūrah takes its name from v. 33. 'Āl-i-'Imrān', like the names of many other sūrahs, is merely a name to distinguish it from other sūrahs and does not imply that the family of 'Imrān has been discussed in it.

The Period of Revelation.

This Sūrah consists of four discourses:

The first discourse (vv.1-32) was probably revealed soon after the Battle of Badr.

The second discourse (vv.33-63) was revealed in 9 A.H. on the occasion of the visit of the deputation from the Christians of Najrān.

The third discourse (vv. 64-120) appears to have been revealed immediately after the first one.

The fourth discourse (vv. 121-200) was revealed after the Battle of Uhd.

Subject.

Though these discourses were revealed at different periods and on different occasions, they are so inter-linked and so inter-connected in regard to their aim, object and central theme that they make together one continuous whole. This Sūrah has been especially addressed to two groups—the people of the Book (the Jews and the Christians) and the followers of Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him).

The message has been extended to the Jews and the Christians in continuation of the invitation in Al-Baqarah, in which they have been

admonished for their erroneous beliefs and evil morals and advised to accept, as a remedy, the Truth of the Qur'ān. They have been told here that Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him) taught the same right way of life that had been preached by their own Prophets; that it alone was the Right Way, the way of Allah; hence any deviation from it will be wrong even according to their own Scriptures.

The second group, the Muslims, who had been declared to be the best Community in Al-Baqarah and appointed torch-bearers of the Truth and entrusted with the responsibility of reforming the world, have been given additional instructions in continuation of those given in the preceding Sūrah. The Muslims have been warned to learn a lesson from the religious and moral degeneration of the former communities and to refrain from treading in their footsteps. Instructions have also been given about the reformative work they had to perform. Besides this, they have been taught how to deal with the people of the Book and the hypocrites who were putting different kinds of hindrances in the way of Allah. Above all, they have been warned to guard against those weaknesses which had come to the surface in the Battle of Uḥd.

Background

The following is the background of the Sūrah:

(1) The Believers had met with all sorts of trials and hardships about which they had been forewarned in Al-Baqarah. Though they had come out victorious in the Battle of Badr, they were not out of danger yet. Their victory had aroused the enmity of all those powers in Arabia which were opposed to the Islamic Movement. Signs of threatening storms had begun to appear on all sides and the Muslims were in a perpetual state of fear and anxiety. It looked as if the whole Arabian world around the tiny state of Al-Madīnah—which was no more than a village state at that time—was bent upon blotting out its very existence. This state of war was also adversely affecting its economy, which had already been badly disturbed by the influx of the Muslim refugees from Makkah.

(2) Then there was the disturbing problem of the Jewish clans who lived in the suburbs of Al-Madīnah. They were discarding the treaties of alliance they had made with the Holy Prophet after his

migration from Makkah. So much so that on the occasion of the Battle of Badr, these people of the Book sympathised with the evil aims of the idolaters, inspite of the fact that their fundamental articles of the Faith—Oneness of Allah, Prophethood, Life-after-death---were the same as those of the Muslims. After the Battle of Badr, they openly began to incite the Quraish and other Arab clans to wreak their vengeance on the Muslims. Thus those Jewish clans set aside their centuries-old friendly and neighbourly relations with the people of Al-Madinah. At last when their mischievous actions and breaches of treaties became unbearable, the Holy Prophet attacked the Bani-Qainuqā'a, the most mischievous of all the other Jewish clans who had conspired with the hypocrites of Al-Madinah and the idolatrous Arab clans to encircle the Believers on all sides. The magnitude of the peril might be judged from the fact that even the life of the Holy Prophet himself was always in danger. Therefore his Companions slept in their armours during that period and kept watch at night to guard against any sudden attack, and whenever the Holy Prophet happened to be out of sight even for a short while, they would at once set out in search of him.

(3) This incitement by the Jews added fuel to the fire which was burning in the hearts of the Quraish and they began to make preparations to avenge the defeat they had suffered at Badr. A year after this an army of 3,000 strong marched out of Makkah to invade Al-Madinah and a battle took place at the foot of Mount Uḥd. The Holy Prophet came out of Al-Madinah with one thousand men to meet the enemy. While they were marching to the battle-field, three hundred hypocrites deserted the army and returned to Al-Madinah, but there still remained a small band of hypocrites among the seven hundred who accompanied the Holy Prophet. They played their part and did their worst to create mischief and chaos in the ranks of the Believers during the Battle. This was the first clear indication of the fact that within the fold of the Muslim Community there was quite a large number of saboteurs who were always ready to conspire with the external enemies to harm their own brethren.

(4) Though the devices of the hypocrites had played a great part in the set-back at Uḥd, the weaknesses of the Muslims themselves contributed no less to it. And it was but natural that the Muslims should show signs of moral weakness for they were a new community which had only recently been formed on a new ideology and had not as yet got a thorough moral training. Naturally in this second hard test of their physical and moral strength, some weaknesses came to the surface. That is why a detailed review of the Battle of Uḥd was needed to warn the Muslims of their short-comings and to issue instructions for their reform. It should also be noted that this review of the Battle is quite different from the reviews that are usually made by generals on similar occasions.

SUMMARY

SUBJECT: GUIDANCE

This Sūrah is the sequel to Al-Baqarah and the invitation therein is continued to the people of the Book. In Al-Baqarah the Jews were pointedly invited to accept the Guidance and in this Sūrah the Christians have particularly been admonished to give up their erroneous beliefs and accept the Guidance of the Qur'ān. At the same time, the Muslims have been instructed to nourish the virtues that may enable them to carry out their obligations and spread the Divine Guidance.

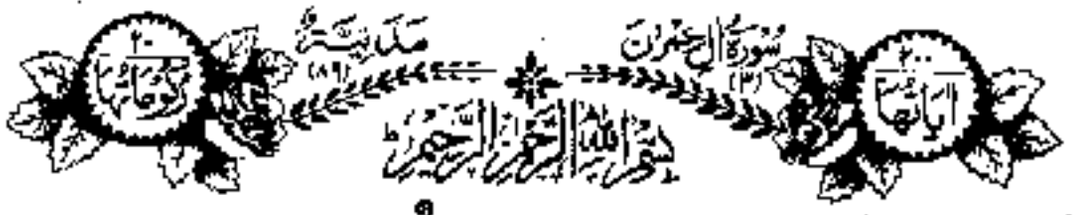
Topics and their Interconnection:

In these introductory verses, the fundamental truths about Allah, Revelation and Life-after-death have been reiterated to serve as fitting preliminaries, leading to the main topics discussed in the Sūrah.	1-32
This discourse is particularly addressed to the Christians and invites them to accept Islam. It clears Jesus and his mother not only from the stigma maliciously set upon them by the Jews, but also refutes the erroneous Christian creed of the Divinity of Jesus which had been formulated because of his miraculous birth. For this purpose the instances of the miraculous birth of John the Baptist to a barren woman and an extremely aged man and that of Adam without father and mother have been cited to show that there is nothing in the birth of Jesus without a father to entitle him to Divinity.	33-65
In these verses the people of the Book, the Jews, have been invited to give up their sinister ways and accept the divine Guidance. At the same time the Muslims have been warned to be on their guard against their malicious intentions, erroneous ways and absurd objections.	66-101
The Muslims have been instructed to learn lessons from the history of the people of the Book and also to guard themselves against their machinations, and to prepare and train themselves to establish virtue and eradicate evil.	102-120
In this portion, a review of the Battle of Uḥd has been made to teach and reassure the Muslims that the machinations of their enemies could do them no harm, if they would practise restraint and fortitude and have fear of Allah. It has been pointed out that the set-back they	121-175

had suffered was due to the lack of some moral qualities and the existence of some evils. Since the main cause of the defeat was the greed of the archers, guarding the pass, the taking of interest has been prohibited to eradicate this evil.

176-189 The main theme of the verses 109-120 has been resumed to reassure and encourage the Muslims against the dangerous plots of their enemies.

190-200 This is the conclusion of the Sūrah and is not directly connected with the verses immediately preceding it but with the theme of the Sūrah as a whole.



الٓمّٓ ﴿١﴾ اللّٰهُ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۙ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ ﴿٢﴾ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ
مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَ اَنْزَلَ التَّوْرٰىةَ وَ الْاِنْجِيْلَ ﴿٣﴾ مِنْ قَبْلُ هُدًى
لِّلنَّاسِ وَ اَنْزَلَ الْفُرْقَانَ ؕ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
شَدِيْدٌ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ عَزِيْزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ ﴿٤﴾ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَخْفٰى عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي
الْاَرْضِ وَ لَا فِي السَّمَآءِ ﴿٥﴾ هُوَ الَّذِيْ يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْاَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ يَشَآءُ ؕ
لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿٦﴾ هُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ مِنْهُ
اٰيٰتٌ مُّحْكَمٰتٌ هُنَّ اُمُّ الْكِتٰبِ وَ اُخَرُ مُتَشٰبِهٰتٌ ؕ فَاَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ
زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُوْنَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَآءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَ ابْتِغَآءَ تَاْوِيْلِهٖ ۚ وَ مَا يَعْلَمُ

III
ĀL-I-'IMRĀN
آلِ عمران

Verses: 200 *Revealed at Al-Madīnah*

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Compassionate.

Alif. Lām. Mīm. Allah! He is the Ever-living, the Sustainer of the Universe: in reality there is no god but He.[1] 1-2

He has sent down to you the Book, which has brought the Truth and confirms the Scriptures which preceded it. Before this, He sent down the Torah and the Gospel for the guidance of mankind,[2] and He has sent down the Criterion (of right and wrong). Now there shall be a severe punishment for those who reject the Commandments of Allah: for Allah is Almighty, Avenger of wickedness. 3-4

1. Please see E.N. 278, Al-Baqarah.

[Contd. on p. 224

تَاْوِيْلَهٗۤ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ ۘ وَالرّٰسِخُوْنَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُوْلُوْنَ اٰمَنَّا بِهٖ ۙ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ
رَبِّنَا ۚ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ اِلَّاۤ اُولُوا الْاَلْبَابِ ۝٧ رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوْبَنَا بَعْدَ اِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا
وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً ۚ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ۝٨ رَبَّنَاۤ اِنَّكَ جَامِعُ
النَّاسِ لِيَوْمٍ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيْعَادَ ۝٩ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ
كَفَرُوْا لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ اَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَآ اَوْلَادُهُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ شَيْـًٔا ۭ وَاُولٰۗىِٕكَ
هُمْ وَقُوْدُ النَّارِ ۝١٠ كَدَاْبِ اٰلِ فِرْعَوْنَ ۙ وَالَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۭ كَذَّبُوْا
بِاٰيٰتِنَا ۚ فَاَخَذَهُمُ اللّٰهُ بِذُنُوْبِهِمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝١١ قُلْ لِّلَّذِيْنَ
كَفَرُوْا سَتُغْلَبُوْنَ وَتُحْشَرُوْنَ اِلٰى جَهَنَّمَ ۭ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ۝١٢ قَدْ كَانَ
لَكُمْ اٰيَةٌ فِيْ فِئَتَيْنِ الْتَقَتَا ۭ فِئَةٌ تُقَاتِلُ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَاُخْرٰى كَافِرَةٌ
يَّرَوْنَهُمْ مِّثْلَيْهِمْ رَاْيَ الْعَيْنِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ يُؤَيِّدُ بِنَصْرِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ ۭ اِنَّ فِيْ
ذٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّاُولِي الْاَبْصَارِ ۝١٣ زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوٰتِ مِنَ النِّسَاۗءِ
وَالْبَنِيْنَ وَالْقَنَاطِيْرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ
وَالْاَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ ۭ ذٰلِكَ مَتَاعُ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَاللّٰهُ عِنْدَهٗ حُسْنُ
الْمَاٰبِ ۝١٤ قُلْ اَؤُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْ ذٰلِكُمْ ۭ لِلَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنّٰتٌ
تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا وَاَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَّرِضْوَانٌ
مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ بَصِيْرٌۢ بِالْعِبَادِ ۝١٥ الَّذِيْنَ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَآ اِنَّنَآ اٰمَنَّا
فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوْبَنَا وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ۝١٦ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ وَالصّٰدِقِيْنَ وَالْقٰنِتِيْنَ
وَالْمُنْفِقِيْنَ وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِيْنَ بِالْاَسْحَارِ ۝١٧ شَهِدَ اللّٰهُ اَنَّهٗ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۙ
وَالْمَلٰۗىِٕكَةُ وَاُولُوا الْعِلْمِ قَاۗىِٕمًۢا بِالْقِسْطِ ۭ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ۝١٨

Nothing in the Earth or in the heavens is hidden from Allah.[3] It is He Who shapes you in the wombs of your mothers as He wills.[4] There is no deity but He, the Al-Mighty, the All-Wise. It is He Who has sent down this Book to you. There are two kinds of verses in this Book: *muḥkamāt* (which are precise in meaning:) they are the essence of the Book,[5] and the other kind is *mutashābihāt* (which are ambiguous.) Those, who are perverse of heart always go after the *mutashābihāt* in pursuit of mischief and try to interpret them arbitrarily, whereas in fact, none save Allah knows their real meanings[6]! In contrast to them, those, who possess sound knowledge, say, "We believe in them because all of them are from our Lord."[7] And the fact is that only the people of insight can learn lessons from such things. They pray to Allah, "Our Lord, let not our hearts become perverse after Thou hast once guided us aright, bestow upon us mercy from Thyself for Thou art the real Benefactor! Lord! Thou wilt surely gather all mankind together on a Day which is inevitable, for Thou never failest to fulfil Thy promise." 5-9

As for those, who have adopted the attitude of disbelief,[8] neither their riches nor their children shall avail them against Allah: they shall become fuel for Hell. Their end shall be the same as that of the people of Pharaoh and other disbelievers who went before them; they treated the Divine Revelations as falsehoods and Allah seized them because of their sins; for Allah is very stern in retribution. Therefore, O Muḥammad, say to those who have rejected your Message, "The time is approaching fast when you shall be overpowered and driven to Hell: and Hell is a horrible abode. You have already had a Sign in the two hosts which met on the battle-field (at Badr). One of these hosts was fighting for the cause of Allah and the other was of the disbelievers: the lookers-on saw with their own eyes that the host of the disbelievers,[9] was twice as big as that of the believers, but (the result of the Battle proved conclusively that) Allah strengthens with His succour whom He wills: there is truly a great lesson hidden in it for those who have eyes to discern."[10] 10-13

Love of lusts for women and children. hoarded Heaps of gold and silver, choicest horses, cattle and corn fields, has been made very tempting for people, but these are mere provisions for the transitory life of this world; the ever-lasting and the best abode, however, is 14-17

with Allah. Say, "Should I tell you a thing better than these? There will be Gardens underneath which canals flow for those, who adopt the attitude of piety; there they will dwell for ever and will have pure spouses[11] and they will enjoy Allah's favour. And Allah watches very closely the conduct of His servants."[12] These are the people, who say, "Lord, we have believed sincerely; forgive us our sins and save us from the fire of Hell." They show fortitude,[13] are truthful, obedient and charitable, and implore Allah's forgiveness in the early hours of the morning.

18 Allah Himself has testified to the fact that there is no deity save Him:[14] the angels and all those endowed with knowledge testify the fact with truth and justice[15] that there is no deity save the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

Contd. from p.221]

2. There exists a common misconception about the Torah (Taurāt) and the Gospel (Injīl) for the people generally take the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament) for the Torah, and the Gospels (the first four books of the New Testament) for the Injīl. The misconception creates doubts about Revelation itself and a question arises, "Are these books really the Word of God? And does the Holy Qur'ān really confirm all their contents"? As a matter of fact, the Torah, which the Qur'ān confirms, is not the Pentateuch but is contained in it, and the Injīl is not "the four Gospels" but is within these books.

The Taurāt consists of those commandments and injunctions which were given to Prophet Moses (Allah's peace be upon him) during his Prophethood, which lasted for about forty years. Of these were the Ten commandments which were inscribed on stone tablets and delivered to Moses on Mount Ṭūr; as regards the remaining Commandments and injunctions he himself had put down in writing. Then he handed one copy of the Torah to each of the twelve tribes of Israel for guidance. One copy was entrusted to the Levites for safe custody, which along with the stone tablets, was deposited in the Ark.

That Taurāt remained quite safe and sound as an entire book up to the first destruction of Jerusalem. But, by and by, the Israelites grew so indifferent to and negligent and unmindful of it that when the Temple of Solomon was under repair during the reign of Joshiah, Hilkiah the high Priest came across it by chance but did not know that it was the Torah; he thought it was only a Law book and passed it on to the Royal Scribe as a curio. The latter presented it to king Joshiah who tore his clothes and ordered Hilkiah and others to consult the Eternal about the

terms of the book. (2 Kings, 22: 8-13). Such was the condition of the Israelites when Nebuchadnezzar sacked Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple, and they lost for ever even the very few copies of the Torah which had long lain neglected in some forgotten niches.

The Old Testament was compiled by Ezra, when the Israelites returned home to Jerusalem after their captivity in Babylon and built the Temple anew. Ezra gathered together some prominent men of his community, and with their help compiled the whole history of Israel which now comprises the first 17 books of the Bible. Of these Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy tell the life history of Prophet Moses and include those verses of the real Taurāt which became available to Ezra and his assistants, who incorporated them in those books at appropriate places in the chronological order of their revelation. Thus it is obvious that the Pentateuch as a whole is not the Taurāt but includes it. The real Taurāt comprises those verses which are scattered all over the life story of Prophet Moses, and it is not difficult even today to locate and recognize them. Such portions where the author says, "God said to Moses," or Moses said, The Lord your God says," the Taurāt begins, and where the narrative of the life story is resumed, there that part of the Taurāt ends. At those places the author of the Bible has inserted certain things by way of explanation or commentary, and it is here that the ordinary reader fails to distinguish the real Taurāt from the commentary. However, those who have an insight into the nature of Divine Scriptures, can distinguish, to some degree of exactness, the explanatory notes from the revealed verses.

According to the Qur'ān, only such scattered portions in the Pentateuch are the Taurāt and it confirms them alone. And this can be testified by putting together these verses and comparing them with the Qur'ān. Here and there one might come across a minor difference in their details, but one cannot find even the slightest difference between the fundamental teachings of the two. Even today one can see clearly that both the Scriptures have come from the same source.

Likewise, the Injīl is the name of those inspired discourses and sayings which Jesus (Allah's peace be upon him) uttered as a prophet during the last couple of years of his life. We have no means now of ascertaining whether these pious utterances were recorded and compiled during the lifetime of Jesus. In the introduction to his translation of the Bible, Moffat says, "Jesus wrote nothing and for a time his immediate disciples felt no impulse to write any account of him. The data of the historical Jesus, therefore is based on the vivid recollections and traditions of the primitive Palestinian disciples. How soon their materials took written shape we cannot tell, but at least one written record of them was probably in existence by about A.D.50." Anyhow, when, long after his recall, the stories of

Jesus were compiled in the shape of four Gospels, (the period of the composition of Mārk, the first to be composed was 65—75 A.D.), some of his written or inspired sayings were also inserted at appropriate places in the historical sketches. Thus it is obvious that the first four Gospels are not the Injīl, the discourses and sayings of Jesus, but they contain it. We have no means of recognizing them from the works of the authors except this: Wherever the authors say "Jesus said so or taught so and so," there the Injīl begins and where they resume the narration, there it ends. According to the Qur'ān, only such portions are the Injīl and these alone are confirmed by it. If these portions are compiled together and compared with the Qur'ān, one will find no serious difference between the two, and, if somewhere a trivial difference appears, it can be removed very easily with unbiased thinking.

3. That is, "He has full, perfect and exact knowledge of the whole universe. Hence the Book revealed by Him will contain nothing but the Truth. As a matter of fact, one can learn pure Truth from that Book alone which has been sent down by the All-Knowing and All-Wise."

4. This implies two important things here:

(1) Allah knows your nature better than yourself or anybody else: therefore, there is no other alternative for you but to trust in the Guidance sent down by Him.

(2) The Benevolent Allah Who has been providing for all your needs, great and small, throughout all the stages of your life, ever since your mothers conceived you, could not possibly have neglected to provide for your guidance, which is after all the greatest need of your life.

5. "*Muḥkam*" is that which is precise, exact, clear and decisive. *Muḥkamāt* are those verses of the Qur'ān which have been so couched as to make their meaning quite plain without any shade of ambiguity. They have been purposely so worded as to make their meaning definite and precise leaving little room for misinterpretation. These verses constitute the fundamental principles of the Book, *i.e.*, they and they alone determine the aim and object for which the Qur'ān has been sent down. They invite the world to Islam, teach morals and give warnings. They refute wrong beliefs and practices, and lay down the way of right living. They expound the fundamentals of religion and state beliefs and practices, morals and duties, commandments and prohibitions. Therefore a seeker after Truth should turn to these verses as these alone can satisfy his needs. Naturally such a person will concentrate on these verses and endeavour to derive the greatest benefit from them.

6. *Mutashābihāt* are those verses in which there is a possibility of more than one meaning. Their object is to give a certain minimum knowledge about the

universe, its beginning and end, the position of man therein, and such other basic things, for these things are essential for the formulation of any system of life. It is obvious that no human language possesses words, expressions, idioms etc., to depict clearly those supernatural things, which have never yet been grasped by human senses, nor seen nor heard nor smelt nor touched nor tasted by human beings. That is why such supernatural things have to be described in terms of human life. That is why the Qur'ān uses ambiguous verses in human language which are liable to give rise to more than one meaning. Thus it is clear that the main benefit of such verses is that they help one approach the Reality and form a conception of it. Hence the more one tries to determine their precise meanings, the more one gets involved in doubts and ambiguities. As a result of this, one will not be able to find the Reality but will be led further away from it and cause mischief. Therefore those, who seek after the Truth and do not hanker after superfluities, rest content with the simple idea of Reality they get from the ambiguous verses, which suffices them for an understanding of the Qur'ān; they concentrate their whole attention on a fuller comprehension of the verses which are precise in meaning. On the other hand, those who love superfluities or seek after mischief, spend their time and energies in giving arbitrary interpretations to the ambiguous verses.

7. This might give rise to a question: how can one believe in the truth of the ambiguous verses, if one does not know their precise meaning? The answer is that a study of the precise verses, and not of the different interpretations of the ambiguous verses, confirms a sensible man in his belief that the Qur'ān is the Word of Allah. When the study of the precise verses once convinces him that the Book is really from Allah, then the ambiguous verses do not create any doubt in his mind and he accepts the simple meanings which are within his comprehension and leaves alone any complicacies if and when they appear. Instead of hair splitting and probing into them, he believes in the Word of Allah as a whole and turns his attention to more useful things.

8. Please see F.N. 161, Al-Baqarah.

9. Although the actual ratio was three to one, yet even a casual observer could not have failed to notice that the number of the unbelievers was at least twice as great as that of the Muslims.

10. A brief review of the Battle of Badr, which had recently taken place, is being made with a view to imparting lessons by making a reference to its events and its results. This Battle taught three important lessons:

(1) It taught that even on the battlefield the Believers, who fight in the way of Allah, behave in quite a different manner from the disbelievers. The latter,

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إِنَّ الدِّيْنَ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ الْإِسْلَامُ ۗ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِيْنَ أُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ إِلَّا مِنْۢ
بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًۢا بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يَّكْفُرْ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ
سَرِيْعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿١٩﴾ فَإِنْ حَآجُّوْكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلّٰهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ ۗ
وَقُلْ لِّلَّذِيْنَ أُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ وَالْأُمِّيّٖنَ ءَأَسْلَمْتُمْ ۗ فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوْا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا ۚ
وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلٰغُ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ بَصِيْرٌۢ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿٢٠﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ
يَكْفُرُوْنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَيَقْتُلُوْنَ النَّبِيّٖنَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ ۙ وَّيَقْتُلُوْنَ الَّذِيْنَ
يَأْمُرُوْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ مِنَ النَّاسِ ۙ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيْمٍ ﴿٢١﴾ أُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ
حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۖ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ نّٰصِرِيْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ
إِلَى الَّذِيْنَ أُوْتُوْا نَصِيْبًا مِّنَ الْكِتٰبِ يُدْعَوْنَ إِلٰى كِتٰبِ اللّٰهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ
ثُمَّ يَتَوَلّٰى فَرِيْقٌ مِّنْهُمْ وَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُوْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾ ذٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوْا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا
النَّارُ إِلَّآ أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُوْدٰتٍ ۖ وَغَرَّهُمْ فِيْ دِيْنِهِمْ مَّا كَانُوْا يَفْتَرُوْنَ ﴿٢٤﴾
فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جَمَعْنٰهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ ۖ وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ
وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾ قُلِ اللّٰهُمَّ مٰلِكَ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَآءُ وَ
تَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَآءُ ۖ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَآءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَآءُ ۗ بِيَدِكَ
الْخَيْرُ ۗ إِنَّكَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿٢٦﴾ تُوْلِجُ الَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَتُوْلِجُ النَّهَارَ
فِي الَّيْلِ ۖ وَتُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَتُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ ۖ وَتَرْزُقُ
مَنْ تَشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٢٧﴾ لَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِنْ دُوْنِ
الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۚ وَمَنْ يَّفْعَلْ ذٰلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ فِيْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّآ أَنْ تَتَّقُوْا
مِنْهُمْ تُقٰىةً ۗ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسَهٗ ۗ وَإِلَى اللّٰهِ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿٢٨﴾ قُلْ إِنْ

Indeed, Islam is the only right way of life in the sight of Allah.[16] Those who were given the Book, had adopted ways different from this Way for no other reason than to enable themselves to behave unjustly towards one another, after knowledge had come to them;[17] they should know that Allah is very prompt at reckoning with those who deny and reject His Commandments and Guidance. Now, if they dispute with you, tell them, "As for me and my followers, we have surrendered to Allah." Then ask those, who possess the Book and those who do not, "Have you also surrendered to Him"?[18] If they have surrendered, they are rightly guided. But if they turn away (you need not worry), for your sole responsibility was to convey the Message. As to the consequence, Allah Himself watches closely what His servants do. 19-20

Give the good tidings of a painful chastisement [19] to those who reject Allah's Revelations and slay His Prophets unjustly and are deadly against those who rise up from among the people to enjoin right and justice. They are the ones whose works have come to nought in this world and in the Next,[20] and they have no helpers.[21] 21-22

Have you not marked the behaviour of those who have received a share of the knowledge of the Book? When they are invited to the Book of Allah so that it may judge between them, some of them evade it and turn away from its judgement.[22] They do this because they say, "The fire of Hell is not going to touch us and even if it does at all, it will be only for a few days."[23] Such self invented beliefs have involved them in various kinds of misunderstandings about their religion. But what will they do when We will gather them together on the Day which is sure to come? On that day, everyone will be paid in full for what one has earned, and none shall be wronged. 23-25

Say, "O Allah, Sovereign of the Kingdom, Thou bestowest kingdom on whomever Thou wilt and Thou takest it away from whomever Thou wilt. Thou exaltest whomever Thou wilt and Thou abasest whomever Thou wilt. All that is good is in Thy power: indeed Thou hast full power over all things. Thou causest the night to pass into the day and Thou causest the day to pass into the night; Thou bringest forth the living out of the dead and Thou bringest forth the dead out of the living and Thou givest sustenance to whom Thou wilt without stint."[24] 26-27

28 Let not the Believers make the disbelievers their friends and take them into their confidence in preference to the Believers. Whoever will do this shall have no relation left with Allah; however your show of friendship towards them will be pardonable, if you do so to guard against their tyranny.[25] Anyhow Allah warns you to fear Him because to Him you shall return.[26]

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like the Quraish, indulge in merry making and enjoying wine, women, music, dance etc., while the former, like the Muslims, practise piety, and fear Allah and absorb themselves in prayer.

(2) The victory of the Muslims, in spite of their smaller number and less equipment, over the disbelievers who had a larger number and better weapons was a clear proof that they had Allah's succour with them.

(3) The defeat was a shocking lesson for the disbelievers, who were neglectful of Allah's power and proud of their equipment and the large number of their helpers. By this, Allah taught that He can bestow power on a small number of poor migrants from Makkah and the farmers of Al-Madinah, to inflict crushing defeat on the Quraish, the most influential and powerful clan of Arabia.

11. Please see E.N. 27, Al-Baqarah.

12. That is, "Allah does not shower His favours erroneously nor whimsically nor does He make cursory and superficial decisions. He is fully aware of the actions, deeds and intentions of His servants, and evaluates them correctly and knows full well who should deserve His favour and who should incur His displeasure."

13. It means, "They stand steadfast for the sake of truth, are not daunted by losses or hardships, are not disheartened by failures, and are not turned aside from the right path by temptations. They stick to the Truth even when there appears to be no chance of success." (Please see E.N. 60, Al-Baqarah also.)

14. That is: This is the testimony of Allah Himself that He alone in the whole universe possesses the attributes of God-head and the authority and the rights of God-head. This is His testimony, and who could be a more reliable Testifier than He Who has direct knowledge of all the realities of the universe? He sees His whole creation spread before Him, and from Him nothing is hidden in the heavens or in the earth.

15. Next to Allah, the most trustworthy witnesses are angels, who are the managing agents of the affairs of His Kingdom of the Universe. Their evidence is based on their personal knowledge, that is,

"None but Allah wields command in this kingdom and none but He gives orders for the administration of the affairs of the earth and the heavens." Then all those people, who have been bestowed with the knowledge of the realities, have been unanimously bearing witness, since the beginning of the world to the present day, that Allah alone is the Master and the Designer of the whole universe.

16. It implies that in the sight of Allah there is only one correct system and one right way of life for man. It is this: Man should worship Allah, acknowledge Him as his Master and surrender himself completely to Him in His worship and service. He should not invent his own way of worship but should faithfully follow that Guidance alone which Allah has revealed through His Messengers, without adding anything to or taking away anything from it. This way of thinking and behaving is called "Islam." And it is the absolute right of the Creator and the Master of the Universe that He should not accept as lawful from His subjects, His own creation, any way other than Islam. One might ignorantly think it to be one's right to follow any system, atheism, idolatry, etc., but the Ruler of the Universe will regard this behaviour as rebellious.

17. It means that originally Islam and Islam alone was professed and preached by every Messenger who was sent by Allah at any time in any corner of the world. Hence any Scripture sent down to any community in any language taught the same Islam. Afterwards, the people distorted this original religion and added to it something to suit their interests or to gratify their lusts, and omitted those things from it which went against their interests. They invented new religions just because they wanted to transgress the prescribed limits and run after undue privileges and gains and distinctions. Thus they made changes in the beliefs, principles and injunctions of the true Faith to make it subservient to their own desires and lusts.

18. The same thing may be expressed thus: "My followers and I have been convinced of this same pure Islam and have accepted the true religion of Allah; now tell us whether you also will give up the innovations which you and your elders have introduced into it and turn to the original true religion."

19. This is an ironical way of bringing home to the disbelievers the consequences of those mischievous deeds in which they rejoice today, regarding them as "nice things."

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تُخْفُوْا مَا فِيْ صُدُوْرِكُمْ اَوْ تُبْدُوْهُ يَعْلَمْهُ اللّٰهُ ؕ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ
مَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿29﴾ يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا
عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُّحْضَرًا ۚ وَّمَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوْٓءٍ ۚ تَوَدُّ لَوْ اَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَ معانقة ٣
بَيْنَهٗٓ اَمَدًا بَعِيْدًا ؕ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسَهٗ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ رَءُوْفٌۢ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿30﴾
قُلْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّوْنَ اللّٰهَ فَاتَّبِعُوْنِيْ يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوْبَكُمْ ؕ
وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿31﴾ قُلْ اَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَالرَّسُوْلَ ۚ فَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاِنَّ
اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿32﴾ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ اصْطَفٰٓى اٰدَمَ وَنُوْحًا وَّاٰلَ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ
وَاٰلَ عِمْرٰنَ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿33﴾ ذُرِّيَّةًۢ بَعْضُهَا مِنْۢ بَعْضٍ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ سَمِيْعٌ
عَلِيْمٌ ﴿34﴾ اِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَاَتُ عِمْرٰنَ رَبِّ اِنِّيْ نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِيْ بَطْنِيْ مُحَرَّرًا
فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّيْ ۚ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿35﴾ فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ اِنِّيْ
وَضَعْتُهَآ اُنْثٰى ؕ وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعَتْ ؕ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْاُنْثٰى ۚ وَاِنِّيْ
سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَاِنِّيْٓ اُعِيْذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ ﴿36﴾
فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُوْلٍ حَسَنٍ وَّاَنْۢبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا ۙ وَّكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا ؕ كُلَّمَا
دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ ۙ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا ۚ قَالَ يٰمَرْيَمُ اَنّٰى لَكِ
هٰذَا ؕ قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿37﴾
هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهٗ ۚ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِيْ مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً ۚ
اِنَّكَ سَمِيْعُ الدُّعَآءِ ﴿38﴾ فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَآئِمٌ يُّصَلِّيْ فِي الْمِحْرَابِ ۙ
اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيٰى مُصَدِّقًۢا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَّحَصُوْرًا وَّ
نَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿39﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ اَنّٰى يَكُوْنُ لِيْ غُلٰمٌ وَّقَدْ بَلَغَنِيَ الْكِبَرُ

O Prophet, warn the people to note it well that Allah knows whatever is in your hearts whether you hide it or reveal it, for He knows everything that is in the heavens and in the earth and He has full power over all things. That Day is approaching when everyone shall find before him whatever he has done, be it good or evil. On that Day one would wish that there were a long span of time between himself and that Day. Allah warns you to fear Him for He is very Compassionate towards His servants.[27] 29-30

O Prophet, tell the people, "If you sincerely love Allah follow me; then will Allah love you and forgive your sins, for He is Forgiving and Merciful." Also say to them, "Obey Allah and His Messenger." And if, in spite of this, they do not accept your invitation, (warn them that) Allah does not love those who refuse to obey Him and His Messenger.[28] 31-32

Allah [29] had chosen (for His Message) Adam, and Noah and the family of Abraham and the family of 'Imrān [30] in preference to all the people of the world. They all belonged to the same chain and were the offspring of one another. Allah knows everything and hears everything.[31] (He was hearing,) when the woman of 'Imrān [32] was saying, "My Lord, I vow to Thee what is in my womb for Thy special service: so accept this offering of mine for Thou hearest and knowest everything."[33] Afterwards when she delivered her child, she said, "Lord, I have delivered a girl" --- and Allah knew very well what she had delivered --- "and the male is not (handicapped) like the female.[34] As it is, I have named her Mary, and I implore Thy protection for her and for her future offspring from the mischief of Satan, the Accursed." So, her Lord very graciously accepted the girl and made her grow up as a good girl and entrusted her to the care of Zacharias. 33-37

Whenever Zacharias[35] entered the sanctuary [36] to see her, he found some eatables with her; he would ask, "O Mary, whence have these come to you?" She would answer, "It is from Allah: Allah provides without stint for whom He wills." Thereupon Zacharias invoked his Lord and said, "Lord, bestow upon me from Thyself righteous offspring for Thou alone hearest prayers."[37] As he stood praying in the sanctuary, the angels called him and said, "Allah gives you the good news of a son to be named John;[38] he will come to confirm a Command from Allah;[39] he will be a great leader: he will be 37-39

highly disciplined: he will be appointed a Prophet, and will be among the righteous."

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20. That is, "As they have spent all their energies and powers in evil ways, their works will bring them to ruin both in this world and in the Next World".

21. That is, "There is no such power which can bring out good results from their wrongly directed efforts or at least make them harmless. All the various agencies, which they believe will help them in this world or in the Next World or in both, shall be absolutely of no avail to them anywhere."

22. That is, "They are asked to acknowledge the Book of Allah as the final authority and bow before its decrees and accept as true whatever is proved to be true by it, and reject whatever is proved to be false by it. "It should be noted that here by the Book of God is meant the Torah or the Gospel and by "the people who have received a share of the knowledge of the Book" are meant the learned people of the Jews and the Christians.

23. As such people regard themselves to be the favourites of God, they delude themselves that they are going to enter into Paradise anyhow, irrespective of the quality of their deeds. They foolishly believe that the fire of Hell dare not touch them because they are "true" believers and the children of such pious ancestors, and the followers of such and such prophets and the disciples of such and such saints, etc., etc. And if at all they are cast into Hell, they argue, they will be kept there only for a few days and that, too, to be cleansed of the impurity of sins and then will go into Paradise permanently. Such misleading ideas and conceptions have made them so bold that they commit the gravest crimes and the most heinous sins fearlessly: so much so that they openly disown the Truth without the least fear of Allah.

24. Verses 26 and 27 fit in beautifully between the preceding and the subsequent verses. From verse 19 begins a warning and challenge to the opponents of Islam, and in verse 25, the Muslims have been consoled with the assurance that their enemies shall be paid in full on the Day of Judgment. But in order to reassure them, Allah has in these verses, answered an unasked question which arises when one sees that the disbelievers and the disobedient to Allah are prospering in the world, while the believers and the obedient servants of Allah are starving and suffering from hardships. The question is: What wisdom underlies this disparity in the prosperity and adversity of the two groups? At the time (A.H. 3) of the revelation of this discourse the Holy Prophet and his Companions were so hard pressed on all sides that the same question was arising in the people's minds. Its

answer is contained in these verses: Allah to Whom belongs all authority, power, wealth, prosperity etc., etc., gives a portion of these to whomsoever He wills, and they should not feel uneasy and anxious about this disparity because He is All-Wise and All-Knowing. Moreover Allah gives wealth to whomsoever He wills; therefore it is not to be made the criterion of honour and friendship. Hence in the subsequent verses, the Muslims have been prohibited from making the prosperous disbelievers,their friends.

25. That is, "If a believer falls into the hands of the enemies of Islam and is afraid of maltreatment and high-handedness, he may conceal his Faith, and live among them as if he were one of them. Or, if they come to know of his Faith, he may make a show of his friendship towards them to save his life. In case of extreme fear, he is permitted even to disown his Faith, if he feels that he is not strong enough to endure their oppression."

26. This is the admonition: Let not the fear of the people dominate over you so much as to drive out the fear of Allah from your hearts. The greatest harm the people can do to you is confined to the worldly life only, but Allah has the power to inflict an everlasting torment on you. Therefore, if you are forced in a case of extremity to hide your Faith due to any danger to your life, you may save your own life and property, provided that you do not in any way harm the interests of the Islamic mission and the Islamic community or the life or property of any Muslim. At the same time you must remain on your guard against becoming the instrument in the hands of disbelievers so as to strengthen the evil forces against Islam and render any service to the disbelievers that might enable them to overpower the Muslims. Remember that, if to save your life you do any kind of harm to the religion of Allah or to the community of the faithful or even to the person of a single believer, or if you render any real service to the rebels against Allah, you will never be able to save yourselves on the Day of Reckoning, when you shall have at last to return to Allah

27. That is, "It is simply out of His extreme compassion for you that Allah warns you beforehand of those things that might lead you to ruin."

28. Here the first discourse ends. If We consider its theme, and especially its reference to the Battle of Badr, we come to the conclusion that the probable period of the revelation of this was some time after the Battle of Badr and before the Battle of Uḥd, that is 3 A.H. A tradition of Muhammad bin Ishāq has generally misled people to fix the period of the revelation of the first 80 verses to 9 A.H., for according to that tradition it was sent down on the occasion of the deputation from Najrān. But obviously, that is wrong for two reasons: first, the subject of this introductory discourse shows clearly that it was revealed much earlier. Second, the tradition of Muqātil-bin-Sulaimān is explicit on the point that on the occasion of the

said deputation only those verses (33-63) were revealed which give an account of John the Baptist and Jesus (God's peace be upon them).

29. From here begins the second discourse. It was sent down in 9 A.H. on the occasion of the visit of the deputation from the Christian State of Najrān, which lay between Hijāz and Yemen. It is said that it comprised 73 villages and towns and was capable of raising an army of more than one hundred thousand strong. The population was wholly Christian and was governed by the "Āqib," who was the head of the community, and the "Sayyid," who was in charge of the social and political affairs and the Bishop, who looked after the religious affairs of the people. The above-mentioned deputation was one of the many who visited the Holy Prophet after the conquest of Makkah, when the whole of Arabia came to realize that the future of the country was now in his hands. This deputation from Najrān to Al-Madīnah consisted of 60 men and the three heads of the government. As they had no mind to go to war, the question before them was either to embrace Islam or to live as (ذمّی) *zimmī* (proteges). On this occasion Allah sent down this discourse to the Holy Prophet to invite the members of the deputation to Islam.

30. 'Imrān was the name of the father of Moses and Aaron and has been mentioned as "Amram" in the Bible.

31. The main cause of the misguidance of the Christians is that they consider Jesus to be the son of God and a partner in God-head, instead of His Servant and Messenger. Therefore this basic error is being corrected with a view to making them understand the true and real Islam. That is why the introduction to the discourse begins with the assertion that Adam and Noah and the Prophets from the family of Abraham and from the family of 'Imrān, were all human beings and none of them was "God." Their only distinction was that Allah had chosen them for the preaching of His religion and reforming the World.

32. If by the "woman of 'Imrān" is meant the "wife of 'Imrān", then this must be a different 'Imran from the one mentioned above in v. 33. In that case one comes to the conclusion that the father of Mary was named 'Imran after that ancestor. But if by the "woman of 'Imrān" is meant a woman from the family of 'Imran, then it merely shows that Mary's mother was a descendant of 'Imrān. We possess no authentic knowledge of the basis on which one opinion may be preferred to the other. Though according to some Christian traditions the name of Mary's father was Iaachim, history does not say who the father of Mary was and to which family her mother belonged. But if the tradition that the mothers of Mary and Elisabeth, the mother of John, were cousins be taken as true, (Luke 1: 36), then the "woman of 'Imrān" will mean a woman from the family of 'Imrān.

The Gospel of Luke (1: 5) says that Elisabeth, the wife of Zacharias. "was of the daughters of Aaron", that is, 'Imrān daughter or woman of 'Imrān; therefore it is clear that there is no anachronism of confounding Miriam, the sister of Aaron, with the virgin Mary. It is a common practice to call children by the names of their ancestors; so both the explanations are equally acceptable. Moreover, it does not make any difference whatsoever, in the line of argument adopted here to explain the miraculous birth of Jesus, whether 'Imrān was really the name of Mary's father or has been called so in the ancestral sense.

33. That is, "Thou hearest the prayers of Thy servants and art aware of their intentions."

34. By this she meant, "Had it been a male, it would have been better because the female is handicapped by many natural frailties and social restrictions and cannot become a priest. A male child would, therefore, have served the purpose better for which I have dedicated my child in Thy way."

35. This happened when Mary had reached the age of discretion and had been admitted into the sanctuary of the Temple (Jerusalem), where she was busy, day and night, in the worship of Allah. Zacharias who had been made her guardian was probably the husband of her maternal aunt and was one of the keepers of the Temple. He was not the Prophet Zachariah, who was killed according to the Old Testament.

36. The Arabic word *"miḥrāb"* usually reminds one of the arch (prayer niche) meant for the *imām* in the mosques. But here this word has been used for those cells which are built on comparatively raised ground adjoining the monasteries and churches. They are meant for the keepers and guardians of the places of worship, and for those who retire for worship in seclusion. In such a cell Mary had retired for worship in seclusion.

37. Zacharias was childless till that time. Seeing this pious young girl, he longed for a good child. Seeing how she was growing under the special protection of Allah, Who supplied her in her seclusion, with provisions from His vast sources, he began to cherish the hope that Allah should bestow upon him a child even in his old age, if He so willed.

38. The Bible mentions him as John the Baptist. (Matthew: Chaps. 3, 11,14; Mark 1, 6; Luke 1, 3).

39. "Command from Allah" here refers to Jesus Christ. The Holy Qur'ān calls him a "Command from Allah" because the birth was brought about miraculously by an extraordinary Command from Allah.

وَامْرَاَتِیْ عَاقِرٌ ؕ قَالَ كَذٰلِكَ اللّٰهُ یَفْعَلُ مَا یَشَآءُ ۝40 قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِّیْۤ
اٰیَةً ؕ قَالَ اٰیَتُكَ اَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلٰثَةَ اَیَّامٍ اِلَّا رَمْزًا ؕ وَاذْكُرْ رَّبَّكَ
كَثِیْرًا وَّسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِیِّ وَالْاِبْكَارِ ۝41 وَاِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ یٰمَرْیَمُ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ
اصْطَفٰىكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفٰىكِ عَلٰی نِسَآءِ الْعٰلَمِیْنَ ۝42 یٰمَرْیَمُ اقْنُتِیْ
لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِیْ وَارْكَعِیْ مَعَ الرّٰكِعِیْنَ ۝43 ذٰلِكَ مِنْ اَنْۢبَآءِ الْغَیْبِ نُوْحِیْهِ
اِلَیْكَ ؕ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَیْهِمْ اِذْ یُلْقُوْنَ اَقْلَامَهُمْ اَیُّهُمْ یَكْفُلُ مَرْیَمَ ۪ وَمَا
كُنْتَ لَدَیْهِمْ اِذْ یَخْتَصِمُوْنَ ۝44 اِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ یٰمَرْیَمُ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ
یُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنْهُ ۖ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِیْحُ عِیْسَی ابْنُ مَرْیَمَ وَجِیْهًا فِی الدُّنْیَا
وَالْاٰخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِیْنَ ۝45 وَیُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِی الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَّمِنَ
الصّٰلِحِیْنَ ۝46 قَالَتْ رَبِّ اَنّٰی یَكُوْنُ لِیْ وَلَدٌ وَّلَمْ یَمْسَسْنِیْ بَشَرٌ ؕ قَالَ
كَذٰلِكِ اللّٰهُ یَخْلُقُ مَا یَشَآءُ ؕ اِذَا قَضٰۤی اَمْرًا فَاِنَّمَا یَقُوْلُ لَهٗ كُنْ
فَیَكُوْنُ ۝47 وَیُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرٰىةَ وَالْاِنْجِیْلَ ۝48 وَرَسُوْلًا
اِلٰی بَنِیْۤ اِسْرَآءِیْلَ ۙ اَنِّیْ قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِاٰیَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ۙ اَنِّیْۤ اَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ
مِّنَ الطِّیْنِ كَهَیْـَٔةِ الطَّیْرِ فَاَنْفُخُ فِیْهِ فَیَكُوْنُ طَیْرًۢا بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَاُبْرِئُ
الْاَكْمَهَ وَالْاَبْرَصَ وَاُحْیِ الْمَوْتٰی بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَاُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَاْكُلُوْنَ وَ
مَا تَدَّخِرُوْنَ ۙ فِیْ بُیُوْتِكُمْ ؕ اِنَّ فِیْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰیَةً لَّكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِیْنَ ۝49
وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَیْنَ یَدَیَّ مِنَ التَّوْرٰىةِ وَلِاُحِلَّ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِیْ حُرِّمَ
عَلَیْكُمْ وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِاٰیَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاَطِیْعُوْنِ ۝50 اِنَّ اللّٰهَ رَبِّیْ
وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوْهُ ؕ هٰذَا صِرَاطٌ مُّسْتَقِیْمٌ ۝51 فَلَمَّاۤ اَحَسَّ عِیْسٰی مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ

Zacharias said, "Lord, how shall I beget a son now that I have grown very old and my wife is barren?" "Thus will it be,"[40] was the answer. "Allah does whatever He wills." He said, "Lord, give me a Sign."[41] "Your Sign is that you shall not (be able to) speak to anyone for three days but by gestures. During this period you should remember your Lord much and glorify His Name in the morning and in the evening."[42] 40-41

Then came the time, when the angels said to Mary, "O Mary, Allah has exalted you and purified you and chosen you for His service in preference to all the women of the world. O Mary, be obedient to your Lord, prostrate yourself before Him and bow down with those who bow down in worship." 42-43

O Muhammad, these are the "unseen" things, We are revealing to you: you were not present there when the priests of the Temple were casting lots by throwing their quills to decide which of them should be the guardian of Mary:[43] nor were you with them when they were arguing about it. 44

And remember when the angels said, "O Mary, Allah sends you the good news of a Command of His: his name shall be Messiah, Jesus son of Mary. He will be highly honoured in this world and in the Next World and he will be among those favoured by Allah. He will speak to the people alike when in the cradle and when grown up, and he will be among the righteous." Hearing this, Mary said, "How, O Lord, shall I have a son, when no man has ever touched me?" "Thus shall it be,"[44] was the answer. Allah creates whatever He wills. When He decrees a thing, He only says, "Be" and it is. (Continuing their message, the angels added,) "And Allah will teach him the Book and wisdom, and give him the knowledge of the Torah and the Gospel, and appoint him as His Messenger to the children of Israel." 45-49

(And when he came as a Messenger to the children of Israel, he said,) "I have come to you with a clear Sign from your Lord: in your very presence, I make the likeness of a bird out of clay and breathe into it and it becomes, by Allah's Command, a bird. I heal those born blind and the lepers and I bring to life the dead by Allah's Command: I inform you of what you eat and what you store up in your houses. Surely there is a great Sign for you in all this, if you have a mind to 49-51

believe.[45] And I have come to confirm those teachings of the Guidance of the Torah which are intact in my time.[46] Lo! I have come with a clear Sign from your Lord;[47] so fear Allah and obey me. Indeed Allah is my Lord, and also your Lord; therefore worship Him alone: that is the straight way."[48]

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40. That is, "Despite your old age and the sterility of your wife, Allah will bestow upon you a son."

41. That is, "Give me a token to assure me beforehand of the birth of a son to an old man and a barren woman."

42. The main object of this discourse is to make the Christians realize the error of their belief in taking Jesus for the son of God, and making him an object of worship. The extraordinary birth of John has been mentioned in the Qur'ān to serve as introduction to the subsequent argument against their wrong belief. The miraculous birth of Jesus could no more entitle him to Divinity than the extraordinary birth of John, brought about in the same family in a different and unusual way could entitle the latter to Divinity.

43. As Mary was a girl who had been dedicated by her mother to the Temple in the way of Allah, the question of her guardianship had become a problem for the keepers because of her sex. They were therefore casting lots to decide the delicate problem.

44. That is, "Although no man has touched you, yet a son shall be born to you." It should be noted that the same word *"kazālika,"* meaning "so shall it be," had been used in response to Zacharias' prayer. It, therefore, carries the same sense here. Moreover, the whole context here corroborates the story that Mary was given the glad tidings of the birth of a son without any sexual intercourse, and the birth of Christ, in actual fact, took place in that unusual way. If a son was to be born to her in the normal known way, and if the event of the birth of Jesus had taken place in a natural way, then the whole discourse starting from verse 33 and ending with verse 63 would become absolutely pointless. Not only that but all other references to the unusual birth of Jesus in the Qur'ān would lose their significance and meaning. The Christians had made Jesus the Son of God and worthy of worship simply because of his unusual birth without a father and the Jews had accused Mary because they had witnessed that she had given birth to a child, though she was not married. Had it been otherwise, then the two groups could have been told plainly that the girl was married to such and such a man and that Jesus was from his seed. In that case, one fails to see the reason why such a long introduction and a series of arguments should have been necessary to remove all doubts about his miraculous birth. Then Jesus could have been called the son of

a particular man, instead of being called "the son of Mary". The position of those people who, on the one hand, profess to believe the Holy Qur'ān to be the Word of Allah and on the other hand try to prove that Jesus was born after the natural coming together of a husband and wife, really try to show that Allah is not able to express Himself as clearly as these people. (May God protect us from blasphemy!)

45. That is, "These Signs are clear enough to convince you that I have been sent by that Allah Who is the Creator and Absolute Ruler of this universe, provided that you are not obdurate but are willing to accept the Truth."

46. That is, "This is yet another proof of the fact that I have been sent by Allah. If I had been a false prophet I would have invented my own religion and by virtue of these miracles striven to divert you from your previous Faith to the New creed. But I profess the same original religion to be true and confirm the same teachings which were brought by the Prophets before me."

The fact that Jesus taught the same religion that had been presented by Moses and the other Prophets is supported even by the existing Gospels. For example, according to the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus declared in the Sermon on the Mount: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." (5: 17).

One of the Pharisees, who was a lawyer, asked Jesus, "Which is the great commandment in the law?" He replied:

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and the great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and Prophets." (Matthew 22: 37-40).

On another occasion Jesus said to his disciples:

"The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not." (Matthew 23: 2-3).

47. That is, "I have come to efface and abolish the superstitions of your ignorant people, the hairsplitting of your jurists, the religious austerities of your ascetics and the restrictive additions made in the Law of Allah under the non-Muslim domination; I will make lawful or unlawful for you only those things which Allah has made lawful or unlawful."

48. This shows that like all other Prophets, Jesus also based his teachings on the following three fundamentals:

[Contd. on p.244

قَالَ مَنْ اَنْصَارِیْۤ اِلَى اللّٰهِ ؕ قَالَ الْحَوَارِیُّوْنَ نَحْنُ اَنْصَارُ اللّٰهِ ۚ اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ ۚ
وَاشْهَدْ بِاَنَّا مُسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿۵۲﴾ رَبَّنَاۤ اٰمَنَّا بِمَاۤ اَنْزَلْتَ وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُوْلَ فَاكْتُبْنَا
مَعَ الشّٰهِدِیْنَ ﴿۵۳﴾ وَمَكَرُوْا وَمَكَرَ اللّٰهُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ خَیْرُ الْمٰكِرِیْنَ ﴿۵۴﴾ اِذْ قَالَ
اللّٰهُ یٰعِیْسٰۤى اِنِّیْ مُتَوَفِّیْكَ وَرَافِعُكَ اِلَیَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِیْنَ كَفَرُوْا
وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِیْنَ اتَّبَعُوْكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِیْنَ كَفَرُوْۤا اِلٰى یَوْمِ الْقِیٰمَةِ ۚ ثُمَّ اِلَیَّ
مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَاَحْكُمُ بَیْنَكُمْ فِیْمَا كُنْتُمْ فِیْهِ تَخْتَلِفُوْنَ ﴿۵۵﴾ فَاَمَّا الَّذِیْنَ كَفَرُوْا
فَاُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِیْدًا فِی الدُّنْیَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ۫ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ نّٰصِرِیْنَ ﴿۵۶﴾
وَاَمَّا الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ فَیُوَفِّیْهِمْ اُجُوْرَهُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ لَا یُحِبُّ
الظّٰلِمِیْنَ ﴿۵۷﴾ ذٰلِكَ نَتْلُوْهُ عَلَیْكَ مِنَ الْاٰیٰتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِیْمِ ﴿۵۸﴾ اِنَّ
مَثَلَ عِیْسٰى عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ كَمَثَلِ اٰدَمَ ؕ خَلَقَهٗ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهٗ كُنْ
فَیَكُوْنُ ﴿۵۹﴾ اَلْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُنْ مِّنَ الْمُمْتَرِیْنَ ﴿۶۰﴾ فَمَنْ حَآجَّكَ
فِیْهِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ اَبْنَآءَنَا وَاَبْنَآءَكُمْ
وَنِسَآءَنَا وَنِسَآءَكُمْ وَاَنْفُسَنَا وَاَنْفُسَكُمْ ۟ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ لَّعْنَتَ اللّٰهِ
عَلَى الْكٰذِبِیْنَ ﴿۶۱﴾ اِنَّ هٰذَا لَهُوَ الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ ۚ وَمَا مِنْ اِلٰهٍ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ ؕ
وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِیْزُ الْحَكِیْمُ ﴿۶۲﴾ فَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِیْمٌۢ بِالْمُفْسِدِیْنَ ﴿۶۳﴾
قُلْ یٰۤاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ تَعَالَوْا اِلٰى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍۢ بَیْنَنَا وَبَیْنَكُمْ اَلَّا نَعْبُدَ اِلَّا
اللّٰهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهٖ شَیْـًٔا وَّلَا یَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا اَرْبَابًا مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ
فَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُوْلُوا اشْهَدُوْا بِاَنَّا مُسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿۶۴﴾ یٰۤاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ لِمَ تُحَآجُّوْنَ
فِیْۤ اِبْرٰهِیْمَ وَمَاۤ اُنْزِلَتِ التَّوْرٰىةُ وَالْاِنْجِیْلُ اِلَّا مِنْۢ بَعْدِهٖ ؕ اَفَلَا تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿۶۵﴾

When Jesus perceived that the children of Israel were bent upon disbelief, he said, "Who will be my helper in the cause of Allah?" The disciples[49] (promptly responded and) said, "We are Allah's helpers:[50] we have believed in Allah; so do bear witness that we are Muslims (who surrender to Allah). Lord! we have believed in that which Thou hast sent down and followed Thy Messenger; so enrol us among those who bear witness. 52-53

Then the children of Israel began to plot (against Jesus) and Allah also devised His secret plan, and Allah is the best of devisers. (It was to carry out His secret plan that) He said, "O Jesus, now I will recall[51] you and raise you up to Myself and cleanse you of (the uncongenial company and the filthy environment of) those who have rejected you and will set up those who follow you above those who have rejected you[52] till the Day of Resurrection. And ultimately all of you shall return to Me: then I will judge between you in what you differ, and punish with a grievous punishment, both in this world and in the Hereafter, those who have adopted the attitude of disbelief and rejection and they shall have none to help them. And those, who have believed and done good deeds, shall be given their rewards in full. And note it well that Allah does not like the transgressors." 54-57

The stories which We are relating to you are full of signs and wisdom. In the sight of Allah, the case of the birth of Jesus is like that of Adam, whom He created out of dust and said, "Be", and he was.[53] This is the fact of the matter your lord is imparting, and you should not be of those who doubt it.[54] 58-60

After the coming of this knowledge to you, if anyone argues with you about this matter, say, O Muhammad, "Come, let us both gather together and also bring our children and your children, our women and your women, and then pray to Allah and invoke Him to lay the liars under His curse."[55] These narratives are absolutely true and the fact is that there is no deity save Allah; indeed Allah is All-Mighty and All-Wise. Then if they turn away (from accepting the challenge) it will be a clear proof of their mischief and Allah has full knowledge of the mischief-makers. 6163

Say,[56] "O people of the Book! Come to what is common between us and you,[57] that we worship none but Allah; that we 64

associate nothing with Him and that none of us shall make as our Lord any other than Allah." If they reject your invitation, then tell them plainly, "Bear witness that we are Muslims (who worship and surrender to Allah alone)."

65 O people of the Book, why do you argue with us about Abraham (as to whether he was a Jew or a Christian? You know that) the Torah and the Gospel were sent down long after him. Why do you not, then, understand even this?[58] You have had enough arguments

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Contd. from p.241]

(1) The Supreme Authority to which mankind should submit and surrender exclusively belongs to Allah and all the social and moral systems should be built entirely on it.

(2) Being a representative of the same Paramount Power, a prophet must be obeyed unconditionally.

(3) Allah alone is entitled to prescribe laws and regulations for making things lawful or unlawful, pure and impure; consequently all laws imposed by others must be abolished.

Thus it is clear that Jesus, Moses, Muhammad and all other Prophets (Allah's peace be upon them all) had one and the same mission. Those people who aver that different Prophets were sent with different missions and to fulfil different aims, are gravely mistaken. Anyone, who is delegated by the Absolute Master of the Universe to His subjects, cannot have any other mission than to prevent the people, from becoming disobedient to and independent of Him, and to forbid them to set others to rank with Allah as partners in His Authority in any way. For, they are sent to invite the people to surrender and submit and be loyal to the Almighty God and worship Him alone.

It is a pity that the existing Gospels do not present the mission of Jesus so precisely and clearly as it has been presented above in the Holy Qur'ān. Nevertheless all the three basic things mentioned above are found scattered over in these Books. For instance, the fact that Jesus believed exclusively in the worship of Allah is clear from the following:

(1) "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." (Matthew 4: 10).

(2) Not only did he believe in this, but also made it the ultimate aim of all his activities and strove to make the people of the earth to submit to the revealed Law of Allah just as the whole universe submits to His physical Law.

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6 :10).

Then the fact that Jesus always presented himself as a prophet and as a representative of the Kingdom of Heaven, and always invited the people to follow him in that capacity alone, is supported by a number of his sayings. When he started his mission in his native place, Nazareth, the people of his own town and his own kinsfolk rose against him and according to an agreed tradition of Matthew, Mark and Luke, he said: "No prophet is accepted in his own country". And when his enemies were conspiring at Jerusalem to kill him and the people advised him to go to somewhere else, he replied: "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." (Luke 13: 33).

When he was entering Jerusalem for the last time, his disciples began to utter in a loud voice: "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord." At this the Pharisees felt offended and asked him to silence his disciples. He replied:

"I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." (Luke 19: 38-40).

On another occasion he said:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart ..... my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11: 28-30). Moreover the fact that Jesus wanted the people to obey the Divine Law rather than man-made laws becomes clear from that tradition of Matthew and Mark which says that when the Pharisees asked, why his disciples transgressed the tradition of the elders and took food without washing their hands, he replied and said, "Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups; and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye." (Mark 7: 6-13).

49. The Arabic word حواری *(ḥavārī)* is almost the equivalent of "helper". In the Bible, they have been called "disciples" and at some places "apostles" because Jesus used to send them to the people to deliver his message, and not because God had appointed them as His apostles.

50. Those people who help establish Islam have been called Allah's helpers. In order to understand its significance, it should be kept in view that Allah has taken upon Himself to persuade human beings to adopt Islam of their free will, for He does not force His will on man in those spheres of his life in which He has granted him freedom of action but likes to convince him by reason and admonition. As it is the work of Allah to bring the people to the right way by admonition and advice, He calls those people who exert their utmost to establish Islam "His helpers and companions." This is indeed the highest position that a servant of Allah can aspire to achieve. For man's position is merely that of a servant when he is engaged in praying, fasting and other kinds of worship, but he is elevated to the high and unique position of God's companion and assistant when he is exerting for the establishment of the way of Allah. And this is indeed the loftiest position of spiritual attainment, to which a man can aspire in this world.

51. The word (مُتَوَفِّي) *(mutawaffī)* in the Arabic text is from (تَوَفّٰى) *(tawaffā)* which literally means "to take and to receive" and "to seize the soul" is not its lexical but metaphorical meaning. Here it means "to recall from mission." Allah recalled Jesus because the Israelites had rejected him in spite of the clear Signs he had brought. They had been disobeying God for centuries and, in spite of many a warning and admonition served to them, their national character was rapidly deteriorating. They had killed several Prophets, one after the other, and had grown so audacious as to demand the blood of any good man who ventured to invite them to the Right Way. In order to give them the last chance for turning to the Truth, God appointed among them two great Prophets, Jesus and John (God's peace be upon them), at one and the same time. These Prophets came with such clear signs of their appointment from Allah that only such people dared reject them as were utterly perverted and prejudiced against the Truth and were averse to following the Right Way. Nevertheless the Israelites lost their last chance also as they not only rejected their invitation but also had the head of a great Prophet like John cut off openly at the request of a dancing girl. And their Pharisees and Jurists conspired and sought to get Jesus punished with the death sentence by the Roman Government. Thus they had proved themselves to be so obdurate that it was useless to give the Israelites any further chance. So Allah recalled His Prophet Jesus and inflicted on them a life of disgrace up to the Day of Resurrection.

It will be useful here to bear in mind the fact that this whole discourse is meant to refute and correct the Christian belief in the God-head of Jesus. Three

main things were responsible for the prevalence of this belief among the Christians:

(1) The miraculous birth of Jesus.

(2) His concrete and tangible miracles.

(3) His ascension to heaven about which their Scriptures were explicit.

The Qur'ān confirmed the first thing and made it plain that the birth of Jesus without a father was only a manifestation of the infinite powers of Allah. He can create anybody in whatever manner He wills. His miraculous birth, therefore, is no reason why he should be made a god or a partner in Godhead.

The Qur'ān also confirms the second thing and even recounts the miracles performed by Jesus, but makes it clear that all those miracles were performed by him, as a servant of Allah, by His leave and not as an independent authority. It is, therefore, wrong to infer that Jesus was a partner in Godhead.

Now let us consider the third thing. If the Christian belief in "Ascension" had been wholly baseless, it could have been refuted by pointing out that the object of their worship, the so-called "Son of God", expired long ago and had become one with dust, and that they could see, for their full satisfaction, his grave at such and such a place. But the Qur'ān does not declare this explicitly. On the other hand, it not only uses such words as give at least a vague suggestion of his "Ascension", but also denies that Jesus was crucified at all. According to it the one who gave a loud cry at his last hour, saying, "Eli,, Eli, lama sabachthani?" and the one whose picture they carry on the cross, was not Messiah at all, because God had recalled to Himself the real Messiah before the crucifixion took place.

It is thus clear that those people who try to prove the death of Jesus from these verses, really try to show that God is not able to express Himself clearly and unambiguously. (May God protect us from such a blasphemy!)

52. "Those who rejected" him were the Jews who were invited by Jesus to accept the Truth.

"Those who follow" him are really the Muslims only but if it may be taken to imply all those who believe in him, then the sincere Christians may also be included.

53. That is, "If one's miraculous birth entitles one to become God or the Son of God, then Adam was better entitled to it because he was created without either a human father or a mother, while Jesus was born without a father only.

54. The main points in the discourse presented before the Christians up to here are:

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هَاَنْتُمْ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ حَاجَجْتُمْ فِيْمَا لَكُمْ بِهٖ عِلْمٌ فَلِمَ تُحَآجُّوْنَ فِيْمَا لَيْسَ
لَكُمْ بِهٖ عِلْمٌ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ وَاَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝ مَا كَانَ اِبْرٰهِيْمُ يَهُوْدِيًّا
وَّلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَّلٰكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيْفًا مُّسْلِمًا ۭ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ۝
اِنَّ اَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِاِبْرٰهِيْمَ لَلَّذِيْنَ اتَّبَعُوْهُ وَهٰذَا النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۭ
وَاللّٰهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۝ وَدَّتْ طَّاۗىِٕفَةٌ مِّنْ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ لَوْ يُضِلُّوْنَكُمْ ۭ
وَمَا يُضِلُّوْنَ اِلَّآ اَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُوْنَ ۝ يٰٓاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُوْنَ
بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَاَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُوْنَ ۝ يٰٓاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ لِمَ تَلْبِسُوْنَ الْحَقَّ
بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوْنَ الْحَقَّ وَاَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝ وَقَالَتْ طَّاۗىِٕفَةٌ مِّنْ
اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ اٰمِنُوْا بِالَّذِيْٓ اُنْزِلَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَجْهَ النَّهَارِ وَ
اكْفُرُوْٓا اٰخِرَهٗ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ ۝ وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوْٓا اِلَّا لِمَنْ تَبِعَ دِيْنَكُمْ ۭ قُلْ
اِنَّ الْهُدٰى هُدَى اللّٰهِ ۙ اَنْ يُّؤْتٰٓى اَحَدٌ مِّثْلَ مَآ اُوْتِيْتُمْ اَوْ يُحَاۗجُّوْكُمْ
عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ ۭ قُلْ اِنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللّٰهِ ۚ يُؤْتِيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ وَاسِعٌ
عَلِيْمٌ ۝ يَّخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيْمِ ۝ وَ
مِنْ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ مَنْ اِنْ تَاْمَنْهُ بِقِنْطَارٍ يُّؤَدِّهٖٓ اِلَيْكَ ۚ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ
اِنْ تَاْمَنْهُ بِدِيْنَارٍ لَّا يُؤَدِّهٖٓ اِلَيْكَ اِلَّا مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَاۗىِٕمًا ۭ ذٰلِكَ
بِاَنَّهُمْ قَالُوْا لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا فِي الْاُمِّيّٖنَ سَبِيْلٌ ۚ وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ
وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝ بَلٰى مَنْ اَوْفٰى بِعَهْدِهٖ وَاتَّقٰى فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ
الْمُتَّقِيْنَ ۝ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَشْتَرُوْنَ بِعَهْدِ اللّٰهِ وَاَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيْلًا
اُولٰۗىِٕكَ لَا خَلَاقَ لَهُمْ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَلَا يَنْظُرُ اِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ

66-68 You have had enough arguments about things of which you had some knowledge: why should you now argue about that also of which you know nothing at all? Allah knows, but you know nothing. Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a Muslim, sound in the Faith,[59] and he was not of those who set up partners with Allah. Surely only those people who follow Abraham are entitled to claim a relationship with Him. Now this Prophet and the Believers are better entitled to this relationship: Allah is the Protector of only those who are Believers.

69-71 (O Believers,) a party of the people of the Book longs to lead you astray, somehow or other; whereas they mislead none except themselves, but they do not perceive it. O people of the Book, why do you deny Allah's Signs, which you yourselves are witnessing?[60] O people of the Book, why do you confound the Truth with falsehood and conceal the Truth knowingly?

72-74 Another party of the people of the Book says to one another, "Profess in the morning what has been sent down to the Believers and reject it in the evening: it may be that, by this device, they will turn back from their Faith."[61] They also say, "Do not follow any except the one who follows your own religion." O Prophet, say to them, "In fact the real guidance is the guidance of Allah: (It is His Will) that He may bless one with the same that He once bestowed upon you, or He may provide others with a strong argument against you to put it before your Lord." O Prophet, say to them, "Bounty and Grace belong to Allah and He may bestow these upon any one He wills,[61a] for He is All-Embracing,[62] All-Knowing:[63] He chooses for His favour whom He wills and His grace is boundless."

75-77 There is among the people of the Book such a person who will return to you intact a heap of gold entrusted to him by you. But there is among them also such a one who will not return even a single *dīnār* entrusted to him by you unless you demand it with importunity. They justify their immoral behaviour, saying, "We are not to be called to account for our behaviour towards the unlettered (gentiles)."[64] Obviously, this is a falsehood of their own which they deliberately ascribe to Allah, knowing well that He has never permitted such a thing. Well, will they not be called to account? Nay, Allah loves only such pious people who fulfil their Covenant and abstain from evil. As for those who barter away their Covenant with Allah and their own

oaths for a paltry profit, they shall have no share in the Hereafter; Allah will not speak to them nor even look at them nor cleanse them of sins on the Day of Resurrection.[65] There is, on the other hand, a painful punishment in store for them.

Contd. from p.247]

First, they have been admonished to realize that their belief in the Godhead of Jesus is gravely ill-founded. He was only a man who was born in a miraculous way by the will of Allah and given the power to perform certain miracles as a cleat proof of his Prophethood. As regards his "Ascension", Allah had arranged to recall him to Himself before the disbelievers could crucify him. In fact, the Master of the Universe has full powers to treat any of His servants in any special way He pleases. It is, therefore, wrong to infer from the exceptional treatment accorded to Jesus that he himself was the Master or the Master's Son or a partner in the authority of the Master.

Secondly, their attention has been drawn to the fact that Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) invites them to the same Truth that had been preached by Prophet Jesus (God's peace be upon him) in his own time and that the teachings of the two Prophets were basically identical.

Thirdly, the disciples of Jesus believed in and followed the same religion of Islam that is being presented in the Qur'ān. However the Christians of the later age discarded the message of Jesus and digressed from the Faith of his disciples.

55. This method of settling the dispute was proposed to show conclusively that the members of the deputation of Najrān were behaving obdurately. As a matter of fact, they had no answer to the things pointed out in the above discourse and could not bring any authority even from their own Scriptures to justify and support their beliefs under discussion. They could not, therefore, assert with full conviction that their beliefs conformed to the fact and were not false. Besides this, when they observed closely the character and the teachings and the works of the Holy Prophet, the majority of the members of the deputation were so impressed that they became convinced in their hearts of his Prophethood; or at least, they could not reject it boldly. That is why they did not accept the challenge: "If you really believe in the truth of your creed, you should pray with us to Allah and invoke His curse on those who say false things about Christ." The fact that they declined to accept the challenge showed plainly to the whole of Arabia that the religious leaders and priests of the Christians of Najrān who were known far and wide for their piety, professed beliefs about which they themselves were not sure.

56. From here begins the third discourse. Its subject-matter clearly shows that it was revealed in the period intervening the battles of Badr and Uḥd. The

contents of the three discourses are so closely interlinked that there is no incoherence anywhere between them. That is why some commentators have been misled to believe that this also formed part of the discourse addressed to the Najrān deputation. But the tone of the discourse commencing from here clearly shows that it was addressed to the Jews.

57. That is, "Join us in the creed which we have accepted and which you also cannot reject as false, for it is confirmed and supported by the teachings of your own Scriptures."

58. That is, "Your Judaism and Christianity came into existence long after the revelation of the Torah and the Gospel, whereas Abraham (God's peace be upon him) had passed away long before those Books were sent down. Now, even a man of ordinary common sense can easily understand that the religion of Abraham could in no sense be Judaism or Christianity. Thus, if Abraham was on the right way and had obtained salvation, as you also believe, then it becomes abundantly clear that one need not follow Judaism or Christianity to be on the Right Way and to obtain salvation." (Also see E.N. 135 and 141, Al-Baqarah.)

59. The Arabic word حنيف *(hanīf)* stands for a person who chooses to follow one particular way after rejecting all other ways. We have conveyed this meaning by "a Muslim, sound in the Faith."

60. There may be another rendering of this sentence: "You yourselves testify these." But in neither case is the sense of the passage affected. The fact is that the pious life of the Holy Prophet and the marvellous effects which his precepts and example were producing on the lives of his Companions, and the high and sublime teachings of the Qur'ān, were all such clear Signs of God that no one, who was familiar with the lives of the Prophets and with the nature of the heavenly Scriptures, could possibly doubt or deny his Prophethood. Thus, in fact, many a people of the Book (especially the learned among them) had realized that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was the same Prophet whose coming had been foretold by the former Prophets. So much so, that they were at times completely overpowered by the force of the plain Truth, and would unwittingly admit and confirm that the teachings of the Holy Prophet were true. That is why, the Qur'ān accuses them time and again of obduracy and deliberate rejection of the Truth after seeing clear Signs of God and being fully convinced of it in their hearts.

61. This was one of those tricks which the leaders and the rabbis of the Jews, living in the suburbs of Al-Madīnah used to play in order to weaken the force of the Islamic Movement. They feigned an interest in Islam only to detach some of the Muslims by some subtle arrangements. Their object was to dishearten

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الْقِيٰمَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيْهِمْ ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ﴿٧٧﴾ وَاِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيْقًا يَّلْوٗنَ
اَلْسِنَتَهُمْ بِالْكِتٰبِ لِتَحْسَبُوْهُ مِنَ الْكِتٰبِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنَ الْكِتٰبِ ۚ وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ
هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ
وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٧٨﴾ مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ اَنْ يُّؤْتِيَهُ اللّٰهُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ
ثُمَّ يَقُوْلَ لِلنَّاسِ كُوْنُوْا عِبَادًا لِّيْ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلٰكِنْ كُوْنُوْا رَبّٰنِيّٖنَ
بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُوْنَ الْكِتٰبَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُوْنَ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَلَا يَاْمُرَكُمْ اَنْ
تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ وَالنَّبِيّٖنَ اَرْبَابًا ۚ اَيَاْمُرُكُمْ بِالْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ اِذْ اَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿٨٠﴾ ع ٨ ٩ ١٦
وَاِذْ اَخَذَ اللّٰهُ مِيْثَاقَ النَّبِيّٖنَ لَمَآ اٰتَيْتُكُمْ مِّنْ كِتٰبٍ وَّحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ
جَآءَكُمْ رَسُوْلٌ مُّصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهٖ وَلَتَنْصُرُنَّهٗ ۚ قَالَ ءَاَقْرَرْتُمْ
وَاَخَذْتُمْ عَلٰى ذٰلِكُمْ اِصْرِيْ ۚ قَالُوْٓا اَقْرَرْنَا ۚ قَالَ فَاشْهَدُوْا وَاَنَا مَعَكُمْ
مِّنَ الشّٰهِدِيْنَ ﴿٨١﴾ فَمَنْ تَوَلّٰى بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿٨٢﴾
اَفَغَيْرَ دِيْنِ اللّٰهِ يَبْغُوْنَ وَلَهٗٓ اَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ طَوْعًا
وَّكَرْهًا وَّاِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُوْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾ قُلْ اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَمَآ
اُنْزِلَ عَلٰٓى اِبْرٰهِيْمَ وَاِسْمٰعِيْلَ وَاِسْحٰقَ وَيَعْقُوْبَ وَالْاَسْبَاطِ وَمَآ
اُوْتِيَ مُوْسٰى وَعِيْسٰى وَالنَّبِيُّوْنَ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ۚ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ
وَنَحْنُ لَهٗ مُسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَمَنْ يَّبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْاِسْلَامِ دِيْنًا فَلَنْ يُّقْبَلَ مِنْهُ
وَهُوَ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ﴿٨٥﴾ كَيْفَ يَهْدِي اللّٰهُ قَوْمًا كَفَرُوْا بَعْدَ
اِيْمَانِهِمْ وَشَهِدُوْٓا اَنَّ الرَّسُوْلَ حَقٌّ وَّجَآءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنٰتُ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي
الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٨٦﴾ اُولٰٓئِكَ جَزَآؤُهُمْ اَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةَ اللّٰهِ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ

There are among them some people, who, in reading the Book, twist their tongues in a way to make you think that what they read is a part of the Book, whereas, in fact it is not a part of the Book.[66] They also assert, "What we are reading is from Allah," when in fact it is not from Allah. They knowingly ascribe the lie to Allah. 78

No man, to whom Allah gives the Book and sound judgment and Prophethood, would say thereafter to the people, "Be worshippers of me instead of Allah." He will surely say, "Be true Rabbānis[67] in accordance with the teachings of the Book you read and teach. He will never enjoin you to make the angels or the Prophets your lords; is it conceivable that a Prophet should enjoin you to adopt disbelief, after you have surrendered to Allah?"[68] 79-80

Remember, Allah made this Covenant with His Messengers: "Now that We have given you the Book and Wisdom, you are hereby bound to believe in and help a Messenger,[69] who comes to you afterwards, confirming the teachings you already possess." After this, He asked, "Do you confirm this and take up the heavy responsibility of your Covenant with Me?" They said, "Yes, we confirm." Then Allah said, "Very well, bear witness to this and I also bear witness with you. Now whosoever breaks the Covenant after this, he shall be a transgressor."[70] 81-82

Now do these people desire to give up the way of Allah's submission (Islam) and adopt a different way (knowing well), that all things in heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, submit to Allah,[71] and to Him shall all return? O Prophet, say, "We believe in Allah and in the teachings which have been sent down to us, and also in those teachings sent down to Abraham, Ismā'īl, Isaac, Jacob and his descendants, and in the guidance that was given by Allah to Moses, Jesus and other Messengers. We do not discriminate against anyone of them[72] and we submit and surrender to Him." And whoso adopts any other than this way of submission (Islam), that way shall not be accepted from him and in the Hereafter he shall be among the losers. 83-85

How can it be that Allah would guide the people who adopted disbelief after they had acknowledged the Faith and after they themselves had borne witness that he was a true Prophet and after clear Signs had come to them?[73] For Allah does not guide the unjust 86-87

people. The fitting recompense for their iniquity is that they are under the curse of Allah and of the angels and of all mankind.

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the Muslims and create doubts among the masses about teachings of the Holy Prophet. For this purpose they began to send people to Al-Madīnah to profess Islam openly and then become apostates and proclaim everywhere that they had come out of Islam because they had witnessed such and such evils among the Muslims and their Prophet.

61a. They were stirred to play this wicked game by their envy of Islam and bias in favour of the religion of their fore-fathers. They have been rebuked, as if to say, "God is not bound by your prejudices, but He bestows His Guidance on anyone He wills, and He has by His grace blessed the Muslims with the same Guidance that was once bestowed upon you. You must understand it well that your wily tricks will not succeed in snatching away that Guidance from them nor in changing it into misguidance but only in providing a strong argument against you before your Lord." By this, Allah willed to see whether they would give up their prejudice and accept the Guidance which had been given to another (Muḥammad) or whether they would persist in their envy and reject it and provide the Muslims with a strong argument against themselves before their Lord that they rejected the Truth merely because of their prejudice and obduracy.

62. The Arabic word (واسع) *"wāse"* (All-embracing) generally occurs on three occasions in the Qur'ān:

(1) When a community of people is warned of their narrow-mindedness and told that Allah is not narrow-minded like them;

(2) When one is rebuked for miserliness and stinginess and is told that Allah is generous and not miserly like him;

(3) When people believe Allah to be finite because of the limitations of their own imagination, they are told that Allah is Infinite and Limitless. (Also see E.N. 116, Al-Baqarah.)

63. That is, "Allah knows full well Who deserves honour and excellence."

64. That is, "They were required to be fair only in their dealings with the Jews, and there was no harm in usurping the property of a non-Jew." This belief was not confined to the ignorant Jewish masses, but their whole religious system was so moulded as to allow differentiation between Israelites and non-Israelites in their dealings. Their moral code disallowed a certain treatment towards the Israelites but allowed the same towards a non-Israelite; one and the same thing was

right for an Israelite but the same thing was wrong for a non-Israelite. For instance, the Bible says: "At the end of every seven years...every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it...", but "Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again." (Deut. 15: 1-3). At another place the law about usury has been laid down like this: "Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury." (Deut. 23: 20). "If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him; then that thief shall die." (Deut. 24: 7).

65. Although they were guilty of the blackest sins, yet they had taken it for granted that they would rise as the favourites of God on the Day of Resurrection and they alone would receive His blessings and favours, for they would be rescued from the consequences of the sins they committed in this world by the intercession of their saints in the Next World, but the fact is that they will be dealt with on that Day in quite a different manner.

66. Taken figuratively the Arabic Text may also imply that they turn away from the right meaning of the Book or twist the words out of Context and pervert the meaning. But the real meaning of the Text is this: while reading the Book, they twist with their tongues certain words or sentences that are against their self-interest or self-invented religious beliefs or theories. Thus they change the meanings so as to mislead people into mental errors or false judgments or wrong religious beliefs. It is an irony that some people sometimes treat the Qur'ān itself in the same way. For instance, those people who believe in the Holy Prophet to be superhuman twist verse 110 of chapter XVIII (قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ) with their tongues and read it (قُلْ إِنِّي مَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ) The first and correct reading means, "Say, (O Prophet), I also am a man like yourselves," while the second reading perverts the meaning thus: "Say, (O prophet), indeed I am not a man like yourselves."

67. (رَبَّانِي) *Rabbānī* (rabbi) was the title of a religious functionary who guided the religious affairs of the Jews, established worship and expounded law.

68. These two verses are a comprehensive refutation of all the wrong things that different people have ascribed to their Prophets and entered into their Books in order to make an angel or a Prophet a god and an object of worship. Here a fundamental formula has been laid down: anything that teaches the worship of anyone other than Allah and raises a servant of God to the high pedestal of God-head can never be the teaching of any Messenger of God: therefore the very existence of such a thing in any book should be taken as a clear proof of its being a

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وَالنَّاسِ اَجْمَعِيْنَ ﴿87﴾ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ۚ لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا
هُمْ يُنْظَرُوْنَ ﴿88﴾ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ تَابُوْا مِنْۢ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ وَاَصْلَحُوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ
غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿89﴾ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بَعْدَ اِيْمَانِهِمْ ثُمَّ ازْدَادُوْا كُفْرًا لَّنْ
تُقْبَلَ تَوْبَتُهُمْ ۚ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الضَّآلُّوْنَ ﴿90﴾ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَمَاتُوْا
وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يُّقْبَلَ مِنْ اَحَدِهِمْ مِّلْءُ الْاَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَّلَوِ افْتَدٰى
بِهٖ ۚ اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ وَّمَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ نّٰصِرِيْنَ ﴿91﴾

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الجزء ٣

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتّٰى تُنْفِقُوْا مِمَّا تُحِبُّوْنَ ۚ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوْا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَاِنَّ

اللّٰهَ بِهٖ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿92﴾ كُلُّ الطَّعَامِ كَانَ حِلًّا لِّبَنِيْٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ اِلَّا مَا حَرَّمَ
اِسْرَآءِيْلُ عَلٰى نَفْسِهٖ مِنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ تُنَزَّلَ التَّوْرٰىةُ ۚ قُلْ فَاْتُوْا بِالتَّوْرٰىةِ
فَاتْلُوْهَآ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿93﴾ فَمَنِ افْتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ
ذٰلِكَ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿94﴾ قُلْ صَدَقَ اللّٰهُ ۗ فَاتَّبِعُوْا مِلَّةَ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ
حَنِيْفًا ۚ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ﴿95﴾ اِنَّ اَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُّضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِيْ
بِبَكَّةَ مُبٰرَكًا وَّهُدًى لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿96﴾ فِيْهِ اٰيٰتٌۢ بَيِّنٰتٌ مَّقَامُ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ ۚ
وَمَنْ دَخَلَهٗ كَانَ اٰمِنًا ۗ وَلِلّٰهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ
اِلَيْهِ سَبِيْلًا ۚ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿97﴾ قُلْ يٰٓاَهْلَ
الْكِتٰبِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُوْنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ ۖ وَاللّٰهُ شَهِيْدٌ عَلٰى مَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿98﴾ قُلْ
يٰٓاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ لِمَ تَصُدُّوْنَ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ مَنْ اٰمَنَ تَبْغُوْنَهَا عِوَجًا
وَّاَنْتُمْ شُهَدَآءُ ۗ وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿99﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا
اِنْ تُطِيْعُوْا فَرِيْقًا مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ يَرُدُّوْكُمْ بَعْدَ اِيْمَانِكُمْ

They shall remain under it for ever; neither will their punishment be lightened nor shall they be reprieved. However, those who repent after this and mend their ways will be redeemed; Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate. As for those who believed and then disbelieved and persisted in their disbelief,[74] even their repentance shall not be accepted because they are obdurate transgressors. Believe it that if anyone of those who adopted disbelief and died as a disbeliever were to fill the whole earth with gold and offer it as ransom for redemption, that will not be accepted. There is a painful punishment in store for such people and they will not find any helpers. 88-91

You can never attain piety unless you spend (in the way of Allah) of what you love;[75] surely Allah will have full knowledge of what you spend. 92

All these articles of food (which are lawful in the Muhammadan Law), were also lawful to the children of Israel[76] except those which Israel[77] had forbidden for himself before the Torah had been sent down. Say to them, "Bring the Torah and read out any passage from it (in support of your objection), if what you say be true." -If even after this, some people persist in attributing to Allah false things of their own fabrication, they are, indeed, unjust people.— Say, "What Allah has said is the very Truth; so follow exclusively the way of Abraham, and Abraham was not of those who associated other gods with Allah."[78] 93-95

Undoubtedly the first house of worship ever to be built for mankind is the one which is at Makkah: it was blessed and made the centre of Guidance for all peoples.[79] In it are clear Signs:[80] there is the spot where Abraham used to worship: then it is the sanctuary, and whoso enters it becomes safe and secure.[81] Allah has, therefore, a right on the people that the one, who can afford to reach the house, should perform Ḥaj there: and the one who disobeys (this Commandment should know that) Allah is All-Sufficient and does not stand in need of any creature of the worlds. 96-97

Say, "O people of the Book, why do you disbelieve in the Revelations of Allah? Surely Allah is watching what you are doing" Say, "O people of Book, why do you stand in the way of him who believes in the Revelations of Allah and desire that he should follow a 98-99

crooked way when you yourselves are a witness to it (that he is on the Right Way)?" Allah is not unaware of what you are doing.

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later insertion by some misguided people. Hence the claim "to be the son of God and equal with God," could never have been made by Jesus himself, but by some misguided followers of his.

69. It implies this: "You people of the Book are bound by the Covenant of your own Prophets to believe in and help Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him) for we entered into a compact with every Prophet to the effect that they (and their followers by implication) must help every Prophet sent by Us for the preaching and the establishment of the way of life for which they had been appointed. Therefore you should not have any prejudice against him, nor consider religion as your own monopoly; you should not oppose the Truth but come under the banner of anyone who raises it for this purpose.

It is interesting to note that according to Palmer (The Koran), "the Talmudic sources confirm that God assembled all past, present, and future Prophets on Mount Sinā'ī and entered into the compact mentioned in the text."

In this connection it should also be clearly understood that this compact was taken from every Prophet before the advent of Hadrat Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him); therefore every Prophet informed his followers about the Prophet coming after him and told them to follow him. But there is no mention in the Qur'ān or in the Traditions that any such compact was taken from the Holy Prophet: nor did he inform his followers about the coming of any Prophet after him and believing in him. On the contrary, he categorically declared that he was the last in the line of Prophets.

70. This implies that the people of the Book were breaking their covenant with Allah by rejecting Prophet Muḥammad (God's peace be upon him) and opposing his mission; they were disregarding that covenant which their Prophets had made with Allah. Hence they were perverted transgressors who had gone beyond the limits imposed by Allah.

71. That is, "When the whole universe and everything in it follow 'Islam' and submit to Allah, what other way of life than Islam do these rejectors, who live in the same universe, seek to follow?"

72. That is, "We do not have different ways of treatment for different Prophets: we accept each and everyone of them and do not reject any one of them and we treat all of them as truthful Prophets and none as a liar. We are free from

prejudice and zeal for ignorance; we bear witness to the fact that each and every servant of Allah, who brought the Truth from Him to any place whatever in the world, was in the right.

73. It has been reiterated here that the Jewish scholars, who lived in Arabia at the time of the Holy Prophet, had understood clearly and borne witness to it that he was a true Prophet of God and that his teachings were the same as those of the former Prophets. But in spite of this, they not only rejected but also opposed him because of their centuries-old prejudices, obduracy and antagonism to the Truth.

74. "They persisted in their disbelief": they did not stop at the rejection of the Faith but went on further and further in their opposition and antagonism to it: they did their very worst to hinder people from the way of Allah by creating doubts and suspicions in their minds and by devising secret plans and plots to make the mission a failure.

75. It is meant to remove the misconception of the Jews about virtue. Their highest ideal of virtue was to put on that outward appearance which had been enjoined by the traditional and centuries-old heritage of their ancestors. Besides this they measured virtue by the standard of that elaborate legal system which had been evolved by their hair-splitting scholars. But in spite of their outward religiosity, even their 'pious' people were narrow-minded, greedy and parsimonious. Moreover they did not hesitate to conceal the Truth or to sell it, and yet the common people took them for virtuous people. This is why they are being told here that they can attain to real virtue not by the mere outward observance of some rituals of their own invention but by loving God and by keeping His will above every worldly thing. As the door of virtue is shut against anyone who loves any worldly thing more than Allah, the one, who is not ready to sacrifice the beloved thing for the sake of God's love, cannot attain to real virtue.

The observance of rituals without this spirit of love is like the paint on worm-eaten wood. It is possible that a human being might be deceived by such outward paint, but it is impossible to deceive God by such devices.

76. Verse 93 answers an objection. When the Jews could not find fault with the basic teachings of the Qur'ān and of the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace be upon him), for there was absolutely no difference between these and the teachings of the previous Prophets, they began to raise legal objections. One of their objections was that the Holy Prophet had made lawful certain things which had been unlawful during the time of the previous Prophets.

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كٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُوْنَ وَاَنْتُمْ تُتْلٰى عَلَيْكُمْ اٰيٰتُ اللّٰهِ وَفِيْكُمْ رَسُوْلُهٗ
وَمَنْ يَّعْتَصِمْ بِاللّٰهِ فَقَدْ هُدِيَ اِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾ يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ
اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ تُقٰتِهٖ وَلَا تَمُوْتُنَّ اِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ وَاعْتَصِمُوْا
بِحَبْلِ اللّٰهِ جَمِيْعًا وَّلَا تَفَرَّقُوْا ۠ وَاذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ اِذْ كُنْتُمْ
اَعْدَآءً فَاَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوْبِكُمْ فَاَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهٖۤ اِخْوَانًا ۚ وَكُنْتُمْ عَلٰى
شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَاَنْقَذَكُمْ مِّنْهَا ۭ كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ وَلْتَكُنْ مِّنْكُمْ اُمَّةٌ يَّدْعُوْنَ اِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَاْمُرُوْنَ
بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۭ وَاُولٰۗىِٕكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿١٠٤﴾ وَلَا تَكُوْنُوْا
كَالَّذِيْنَ تَفَرَّقُوْا وَاخْتَلَفُوْا مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَاۗءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنٰتُ ۭ وَاُولٰۗىِٕكَ لَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿١٠٥﴾ يَّوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوْهٌ وَّتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوْهٌ ۚ فَاَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ اسْوَدَّتْ
وُجُوْهُهُمْ ۣ اَكَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ اِيْمَانِكُمْ فَذُوْقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُوْنَ ﴿١٠٦﴾
وَاَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ ابْيَضَّتْ وُجُوْهُهُمْ فَفِيْ رَحْمَةِ اللّٰهِ ۭ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿١٠٧﴾
تِلْكَ اٰيٰتُ اللّٰهِ نَتْلُوْهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ ۭ وَمَا اللّٰهُ يُرِيْدُ ظُلْمًا لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿١٠٨﴾
وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۭ وَاِلَى اللّٰهِ تُرْجَعُ الْاُمُوْرُ ﴿١٠٩﴾ كُنْتُمْ
خَيْرَ اُمَّةٍ اُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَاْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَتُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ ۭ وَلَوْ اٰمَنَ اَهْلُ الْكِتٰبِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ۭ مِنْهُمُ
الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ وَاَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿١١٠﴾ لَنْ يَّضُرُّوْكُمْ اِلَّآ اَذًى ۭ وَاِنْ يُّقَاتِلُوْكُمْ
يُوَلُّوْكُمُ الْاَدْبَارَ ۣ ثُمَّ لَا يُنْصَرُوْنَ ﴿١١١﴾ ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ اَيْنَ مَا ثُقِفُوْٓا
اِلَّا بِحَبْلٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَحَبْلٍ مِّنَ النَّاسِ وَبَاۗءُوْ بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَ

O Believers, if you follow some of the people of the Book they will again turn you away from belief into unbelief. There is no reason why you should now turn to unbelief, when Allah's Revelations are being recited to you and His Messenger is among you; whoso holds fast to Allah, surely he will be guided to the Right Way. 100-101

O Believers, fear Allah as He should be feared and see that you do not die save as true Muslims.[82] Hold fast together to Allah's cord[83] and let nothing divide you. Remember the favour of Allah upon you, when you were enemies to one another, then He united your hearts, and by His grace, you became like brothers, and you were on the brink of the abyss of Fire and He rescued you from it.[84] Thus does Allah make His signs clear to you so that you may find the right path to true success by these.[85] 102-103

There should always be among you some people who invite to what is good and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong: They alone will attain true success. And do not be like those, who became divided into sects and got involved in differences of opinion even after receiving clear teachings.[86] Those (who have caused divisions), shall suffer a terrible punishment on the Day, when the faces (of some) will be brightened with joy and those of others shall be blackened with gloom. (It will be said to those,) whose faces shall be blackened, "Did you adopt the way of disbelief after receiving Faith? Well, then taste the torment for showing gross ingratitude towards it." As regards those, whose faces will be brightened, they will enjoy Allah's mercy and abide therein for ever. These are Allah's Revelations, which We are reciting to you in all Truth, for Allah does not will to be unjust[87] to the people of the world. All that is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah, and to Allah are all the matters presented. 104-109

Now you are the best community which has been raised up for the guidance of mankind;[88] you enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah. Had these people of the Book[89] also believed, it would have surely been better for them. Though there are among them some believers, yet most of them are transgressors. Anyhow they can do no harm to you: the worst they can do is to inflict a trifling hurt on you. If they fight with you, they will turn their backs on you, and shall not get any help from anywhere. Disgrace and humiliation have been stamped upon them wherever they may be 110-112

except in the case when they get refuge under the favour of Allah or under the patronage of other people.[90] They have incurred the wrath of Allah; therefore misery and humiliation have been stamped upon them. This is because they rejected the Revelations of Allah and killed His Prophets without any just cause; this is the consequence of their disobedience and their transgression.

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77. If Israel refers to the children of Israel, then it would mean that before the revelation of the Torah, they themselves had made certain things unlawful because these had been unlawful by custom. But if it refers to Jacob (and that is more probable), then it means that he did not eat certain things because he did not like them or abstained from them on account of some illness, but his children began to believe these to be unlawful. The subsequent verse shows that the law in the Bible which declared the camel and the hare etc., to be unlawful was not in the Torah, but was later on inserted in it by the Jewish scholars. (For details please refer to E. N. 122 of Al-An'ām).

78. It is meant to bring home to them this lesson: obedience to God alone is the root of the real Faith, which was taught by Abraham, but you have discarded that and associated other gods with Him. Besides this, you have entangled yourselves in minor legal issues which had been raised by your scholars after you had deviated from the way of Abraham during the centuries of your degradation.

79. Their objection was about the change of *qiblah* to the Ka'abah (Makkah) from the Temple (Jerusalem), which had been the *qiblah* of the previous Prophets. This objection had already been answered in Al-Baqarah, but as the Jews persisted in their criticism, it has again been answered here. It has been asserted that the Ka'abah was built by Abraham long before the Temple and therefore it had priority of time for being the *qiblah*. The Bible itself bears testimony to the fact that the Temple was built by Solomon some 450 years after Moses (I Kings, 6: 1) and made *qiblah* during his reign. (I Kings, 8: 29-30.) On the other hand, all the traditions of Arabia unanimously agree that the Ka'abah was built by Abraham some 900 years before the advent of Moses. The fact that the Ka'abah has priority of time over the Temple is so obvious that none can deny it.

80. There are such clear Signs in "the House:" to show that Allah has accepted it and approved it as "His House." Though it has been built in a barren place, Allah has provided the people of the neighbourhood with the best of provisions. Besides this, though there was chaos and disorder in the whole of Arabia for about 2500 years before the advent of Islam, yet there reigned peace and security in the Ka'abah and in its surroundings. Not only this: there was

because of it, peace for four months every year in the whole of Arabia. Another Sign was the miraculous destruction of Abrahah and his army, when he attacked Makkah in order to destroy the Ka'abah. At the time of the Revelation of the Qur'ān, every Arab knew well even the details of this incident and there were even those who had actually beheld the occurrence.

81. The inviolable sanctity of the Ka'abah was so much respected even in the dark days of ignorance that blood thirsty enemies dared not touch each other in it.

In v. 97, the word (كَفَرَ) *kafara* does not mean that the one, who disobeys this Commandment of Allah and does not perform Ḥaj even if one can afford it, becomes a disbeliever in the technical sense. It means that the person has adopted the attitude of a disbeliever even after his profession of belief in Allah and His Prophet. This is obvious because the Commandment to perform Ḥaj has not been addressed to the disbelievers but to those who profess to be Muslims. A Muslim judge, therefore, will not declare him to be a disbeliever and apostate for this reason, as if he had gone out of the pale of Islam.

"Allah does not stand .... world :" Allah does not stand in need of any help from the people, whether they be believers or dis-believers. It is for their own good if they become sincere believers. On the other hand, those people, who reject the Commandments of Allah by word or deed, will not be considered to be Believers by Allah, even if they professed to be Believers.

82. That is, "Be loyal and obedient to Allah up to your last breath."

83. "Allah's cord" is the way of life prescribed by Him. It is a "cord" because it keeps intact the relations of the Believers with Allah and also binds and unites them into a community. "Hold fast together to Allah's cord" implies that the Muslims should give the greatest importance to Allah's Way, and should make it the centre of all their interests, and exert their utmost to establish it and co-operate with one another for its service. When and if they let loose this cord and deviate from its basic principles, they would inevitably suffer from disunity and would be divided into sections and sub-sections, like the communities of the former Prophets. As a consequence of this, they would meet with disgrace both in this world and in the Next.

84. This refers to that horrible state of the Arabs from which they were rescued by Islam. Before Islam, their clans were divided into hostile camps, who went to war for frivolous reasons. Human life had lost its sanctity and people were killed without any pangs of conscience. The fire of enmity would have burnt to

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ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَسْكَنَةُ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا يَكْفُرُوْنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَيَقْتُلُوْنَ
الْاَنْۢبِيَآءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ ذٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَّكَانُوْا يَعْتَدُوْنَ ﴿١١٢﴾ لَيْسُوْا سَوَآءً
مِنْ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ اُمَّةٌ قَآئِمَةٌ يَّتْلُوْنَ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ اٰنَآءَ الَّيْلِ وَهُمْ
يَسْجُدُوْنَ ﴿١١٣﴾ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَيَاْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَ
يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسَارِعُوْنَ فِى الْخَيْرٰتِ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ مِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿١١٤﴾
وَمَا يَفْعَلُوْا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَنْ يُّكْفَرُوْهُ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِالْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿١١٥﴾ اِنَّ
الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لَنْ تُغْنِىَ عَنْهُمْ اَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَآ اَوْلَادُهُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ شَيْـًٔا
وَاُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿١١٦﴾ مَثَلُ مَا يُنْفِقُوْنَ فِىْ هٰذِهِ
الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ رِيْحٍ فِيْهَا صِرٌّ اَصَابَتْ حَرْثَ قَوْمٍ ظَلَمُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ
فَاَهْلَكَتْهُ وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَلٰكِنْ اَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُوْنَ ﴿١١٧﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ
اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوْا بِطَانَةً مِّنْ دُوْنِكُمْ لَا يَاْلُوْنَكُمْ خَبَالًا وَدُّوْا مَا عَنِتُّمْ
قَدْ بَدَتِ الْبَغْضَآءُ مِنْ اَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَمَا تُخْفِىْ صُدُوْرُهُمْ اَكْبَرُ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا
لَكُمُ الْاٰيٰتِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿١١٨﴾ هَآاَنْتُمْ اُولَآءِ تُحِبُّوْنَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِبُّوْنَكُمْ وَ
تُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْكِتٰبِ كُلِّهٖ وَاِذَا لَقُوْكُمْ قَالُوْٓا اٰمَنَّا وَاِذَا خَلَوْا عَضُّوْا عَلَيْكُمُ
الْاَنَامِلَ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ قُلْ مُوْتُوْا بِغَيْظِكُمْ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ﴿١١٩﴾
اِنْ تَمْسَسْكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ وَاِنْ تُصِبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَّفْرَحُوْا بِهَا وَاِنْ
تَصْبِرُوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْـًٔا اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ مُحِيْطٌ ﴿١٢٠﴾
وَاِذْ غَدَوْتَ مِنْ اَهْلِكَ تُبَوِّئُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ مَقَاعِدَ لِلْقِتَالِ وَاللّٰهُ سَمِيْعٌ
عَلِيْمٌ ﴿١٢١﴾ اِذْ هَمَّتْ طَّآئِفَتٰنِ مِنْكُمْ اَنْ تَفْشَلَا وَاللّٰهُ وَلِيُّهُمَا وَعَلَى اللّٰهِ

Yet all the people of the Book are not alike: there are among them some who are steadfastly on the right path; who recite the Revelations of Allah at night and fall prostrate before Him; who believe in Allah and the Last Day; who enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and remain earnestly engaged in good works; these are the righteous people, and whatever good they do, they will not be denied the just reward for it, for Allah knows full well the pious people. As for those who have adopted the way of disbelief, neither their wealth nor their children shall avail them against Allah; they deserve Hell, and there they shall abide for ever. Whatever they are spending in this worldly life may be likened to the wind that brings frost in it and smites and destroys totally the tillage of those who have been unjust to themselves;[91] Allah has not done any injustice to them but in fact they themselves are doing injustice to themselves. 113-117

O Believers, do not take into your confidence any other than the people of your own community for they never miss any opportunity of exploiting any weakness of yours.[92] They desire that which is harmful to you; their malice has become apparent from what they say, but what they conceal in their hearts is yet far worse. We have made clear to you the signs thereof, and if you are wise, (you will be very cautious in your relations with them.) As for you, you love them but they do not love you, even though you believe in all the revealed Books.[93] When they meet you, they say, "We also believe (in your Prophet and in your Book"), but when they go aside, they bite their finger-tips in their rage against you.— Say to them, "Perish in your rage: Allah knows even that which is hidden in the hearts." They grieve if you are blessed with some good and rejoice if an evil befalls you. But their crafty schemes cannot harm you at all, if you show fortitude and fear Allah in whatever you do. Allah encircles whatever they are doing. 118-120

O Messenger,[94] mention that occasion to the Muslims when you set out from your house-hold early in the morning and began to assign to the Muslims their positions on the battlefield (of Uḥd). Allah hears everything and knows everything. 121

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ashes all the Arabs, if blessed Islam had not rescued them from it. This blessing had appeared in a tangible form at Al-Madīnah at the time of the revelation of

these verses. The two clans—Aus and Khazraj—who had been enemies for years and had been involved in bitter feuds and bloody battles, became brethren after they embraced Islam. Not only this: they also showed that spirit of sacrifice for the rehabilitation of the refugees from Makkah that has no parallel in history.

85. That is to say, "If you have eyes to see, you can yourselves judge whether your welfare lies in holding fast to Allah's way or in discarding it and reverting to the old ways of ignorance, and whether your well-wishers are Allah and His Messenger or the Jews and the hypocrites and the polytheists who are trying to revert you to your former condition."

86. This refers to those communities which received the Guidance and clear teachings from the Messengers of Allah but after some time discarded the basic principles of the Guidance and divided themselves into different sects on the basis of irrelevant and minor side-issues and were involved in useless and meaningless squabbles. They became so engrossed in these things that they totally forgot the mission which Allah had entrusted to them and lost interest even in the basic principles on which, in fact, depends the real success of humanity.

87. As Allah, does not will to be unjust to the people of the world, He is showing them Guidance and warning them before-hand of those things of which they shall have ultimately to render an account. Thus, those who follow the crooked ways even after this and do not return to the Right Way are doing injustice to themselves.

88. This is the same declaration that has been made in Al-Baqarah (v. 143). The followers of the Holy Prophet are being reminded that they have been appointed to the leadership of the world from which the children of Israel had been deposed on account of their incompetence. The Muslims have been appointed to that office because they possess those moral qualities which are essential for just leadership. These are to establish virtue and to eradicate evil practically and believe that there is no god other than Allah to put into practice the implication of this belief. They should, therefore, understand the responsibilities of the work which had been entrusted to them and avoid the errors into which their predecessors had fallen. (Please refer also to E. N. 123-144 of Al-Baqarah).

89. Here the Jews are "The people of the Book."

90. That is, "The little security that they enjoy anywhere in the world has not been won by themselves but has been the result of the help and kindness of others. They have been getting this either from some Muslim states in the name of Allah or from some non-Muslim states for other reasons." And if sometimes they have succeeded in gaining even some political power, they have not accomplished this through their own efforts but have owed it to others.

91. In this similitude, "tillage" stands for human life, for one sows in it deeds or misdeeds which one shall have to harvest in the Next World. The "wind" refers to the superficial and hypocritical show of charity that impels the unbelievers to spend their wealth in charity and public works. And "frost" refers to the lack of faith and willingness to obey the Divine Law in its right spirit, which makes void the acts and deeds of one's life. By this similitude, Allah teaches this lesson; just as air is very useful for the growth of crops but it also destroys these if there is frost in it: in the same way charity helps nourish the harvest that is to be reaped in the Next World but it destroys the same, if it is poisoned with unbelief. It is obvious that Allah is the Master of man as well as of the wealth that he possesses and of the kingdom in which he is acting. Now, if this slave of Allah does not acknowledge the Sovereignty of his Master or unlawfully sets up other objects of worship and does not obey His Law in his exploitation of His wealth and kingdom, he shall be guilty of a crime. Therefore, he will not be entitled to any reward for his charity, but shall be prosecuted for his unlawful exploitation. The charity of such a man maybe likened to the charity of a servant who steals a sum of money from the treasure of his master and spends it as he likes.

92. Here Allah warns the Muslims to guard against the hypocritical attitude of the Jews who lived in the suburbs of Al-Madīnah. The two clans, Aus and Khazraj, had been on friendly terms with them from very ancient times and kept sincere relations with them even after embracing Islam. In contrast to this, the Jews, who had turned into the enemies of the Holy Prophet and his mission, could not be friendly with anyone who had joined the new Movement. Accordingly, they kept up an outward show of friendship with the *Anṣār* but in their heart of hearts they had become their bitter enemies. They, however, exploited this outward friendship and tried to sow seeds of dissension and create chaos in the Muslim Community. They also tried to draw out secrets from the Muslims and pass them on to their enemies. That is why Allah has warned the Muslims that they should not take such people into their confidence.

93. That is, "It is strange that the Jews, who themselves are guilty of rejecting your Book, whereas you believe in their Book, the Torah, along with your Book, the Qur'ān, should have a grievance against you. There is no reason why they should complain against you: on the other hand, you have a cogent grievance against them for their disbelief in your Book."

94. From here begins the fourth discourse, which was revealed after the battle of Uḥd. It has been beautifully connected with the previous discourse which ended with the admonition that the machinations of their enemies could do them no harm, if they would show restraint, and fear Allah. This discourse is an apt

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فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿١٢٢﴾ وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللّٰهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَّاَنْتُمْ اَذِلَّةٌ ۚ فَاتَّقُوا
اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿١٢٣﴾ اِذْ تَقُوْلُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اَلَنْ يَّكْفِيَكُمْ اَنْ يُّمِدَّكُمْ
رَبُّكُمْ بِثَلٰثَةِ اٰلٰفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ مُنْزَلِيْنَ ﴿١٢٤﴾ بَلٰٓى ۙ اِنْ تَصْبِرُوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا وَ
يَاْتُوْكُمْ مِّنْ فَوْرِهِمْ هٰذَا يُمْدِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ اٰلٰفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ
مُسَوِّمِيْنَ ﴿١٢٥﴾ وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللّٰهُ اِلَّا بُشْرٰى لَكُمْ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوْبُكُمْ بِهٖ ۚ وَ
مَا النَّصْرُ اِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ الْعَزِيْزِ الْحَكِيْمِ ﴿١٢٦﴾ لِيَقْطَعَ طَرَفًا مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ
كَفَرُوْٓا اَوْ يَكْبِتَهُمْ فَيَنْقَلِبُوْا خَآئِبِيْنَ ﴿١٢٧﴾ لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْاَمْرِ شَيْءٌ اَوْ
يَتُوْبَ عَلَيْهِمْ اَوْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَاِنَّهُمْ ظٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿١٢٨﴾ وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ
مَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۭ يَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ
رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿١٢٩﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَاْكُلُوا الرِّبٰوٓا اَضْعَافًا مُّضٰعَفَةً ۠ وَاتَّقُوا
اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿١٣٠﴾ وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِيْٓ اُعِدَّتْ لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿١٣١﴾ وَاَطِيْعُوا
اللّٰهَ وَالرَّسُوْلَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُوْنَ ﴿١٣٢﴾ وَسَارِعُوْٓا اِلٰى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَ
جَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمٰوٰتُ وَالْاَرْضُ ۙ اُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿١٣٣﴾ الَّذِيْنَ يُنْفِقُوْنَ
فِي السَّرَّآءِ وَالضَّرَّآءِ وَالْكٰظِمِيْنَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِيْنَ عَنِ النَّاسِ ۭ وَ
اللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿١٣٤﴾ وَالَّذِيْنَ اِذَا فَعَلُوْا فَاحِشَةً اَوْ ظَلَمُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ
ذَكَرُوا اللّٰهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوْا لِذُنُوْبِهِمْ ۠ وَمَنْ يَّغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ ۡ وَ
لَمْ يُصِرُّوْا عَلٰي مَا فَعَلُوْا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿١٣٥﴾ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ جَزَاۗؤُهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةٌ مِّنْ
رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنّٰتٌ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ۭ وَنِعْمَ اَجْرُ
الْعٰمِلِيْنَ ﴿١٣٦﴾ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ ۙ فَسِيْرُوْا فِي الْاَرْضِ فَانْظُرُوْا

Remember that two groups from among you were about to show cowardice,[95] though Allah was there to succour them, and the Believers should trust in Allah alone. Indeed Allah had already succoured you in the battle of Badr when you were in a much weaker position, therefore you should refrain from showing ingratitude towards Allah: it is expected that you will be grateful now. 122-123

Remember when you said to the Believers, "Does it not suffice you that Allah should help you by sending down three thousand angels?"[96]—Yes, if you show fortitude and fear Allah in whatever you do, Allah will help you with (not three thousand but) five thousand angels, known by certain marks, in case of a sudden attack from the enemy. Allah has told you this so that you may rejoice and your hearts be filled with peace: victory and succour come from Allah alone, Who is All-Powerful, All-Wise. (He will succour you) so that He may cut off a flank of the disbelievers or put them to rout with dishonour. 124-127

(O Prophet,) you have no authority to decide the affair: Allah alone has the authority to pardon them or punish them for they are workers of iniquity. Allah is the Owner of whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth: He may forgive whomever He pleases and punish whomever He wills; Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.[97] 128-129

O Believers, give up the devouring of interest by doubling and redoubling it,[98] and fear Allah: it is expected that you will achieve (true) success. And guard yourselves against that Fire which has been prepared for the disbelievers, and obey Allah and His Messenger; it is expected that you will be shown mercy. Hasten to follow the path that leads to forgiveness from your Lord and to the Garden, which is as vast as the heavens and the earth and has been prepared for those pious people who spend their wealth freely in the way of Allah alike in prosperity and in adversity; who control their rage and forgive other people,—Allah likes such good people very much,[99]—who, if ever they commit a base deed or wrong their own soul by the commission of a sin, remember Allah instantly and ask for forgiveness from Him for their shortcomings—for who, but Allah, can forgive sins?—who do not knowingly persist in the wrongs they did. These will be rewarded with forgiveness from Allah and with Gardens beneath which canals flow and they will reside therein for ever: and how excellent is the 130-136

reward of those who do good deeds.

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continuation of the same theme, because the setback in the battle of Uḥd was due to lack of restraint and lack of fear of Allah.

As a review has been made of all the important events of the battle in order to bring home the lessons, it will be very useful to keep in view their background, because in the discourse only passing references have been made to them without any details.

In the beginning of *Shawwāl* (A.H. 3), the Quraish attacked Al-Madīnah with an army of 3,000 men. They not only out-numbered the Muslims but were also much better equipped. Besides this, they were filled with passion to avenge their defeat at Badr. The Holy Prophet and his experienced Companions were of the opinion that they should defend Al-Madīnah from within the walls, but some young men, who had not taken part in the battle of Badr, were so imbued with the spirit of martyrdom that they insisted on going out to meet the enemy. At last on their persistence, the Holy Prophet decided to go out to fight. So he led out an army of 1,000 men but at Shaut, 'Abdullah bin Ubayy, the ring leader of the hypocrites, deserted him with his 300 men. Naturally this treacherous act produced much confusion in the Muslim army. So much so that two parties, Banū Salmah and Banū Hārithah, were so disheartened that they began to waver in their minds and were about to turn back, but were dissuaded from this by those Companions who had remained firm and constant.

Then the Holy Prophet marched to Mount Uḥd with the 700 men left with him after the desertion of 'Abdullah bin Ubayy. He arrayed his men at the foot of the Mount so that the army of the Quraish was in their front and Mount Uḥd at their back. Thus the only vulnerable point was a pass on one side, where he posted 50 archers under the command of 'Abdullah bin Jubair, saying, " to let not any enemy come near us and do not leave your posts in any case whatsoever. Even if you see birds peck at our flesh, you should not abandon your posts at all."

In the initial stage of the battle, the Muslim army had the upper hand and succeeded in creating great confusion in the army of the enemy. But instead of pursuing this initial success to the final victory, they were so lured by their greed for booty that they began to loot the spoils. When the archers, who were guarding the pass, saw their comrades plundering the fleeing enemy, they also deserted their posts in order to join the looters. In vain did Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Jubair remind them of the strict command of the Holy Prophet to dissuade them from this, but only a few of them listened to him. Khalid bin Walīd, who was commanding the cavalry of the enemy, made full use of this opportune moment. He rode round the

Mount and attacked the Muslims from behind through the pass. Ḥadrat 'Abdullah bin Jubair did his best to defend it with the few men left with him, but in vain, and Khalid fell upon the Muslims who were engaged in the plunder of spoils. They were so overwhelmed by this sudden attack from behind that they took to their heels in confusion. To add to their misery, the Quraish who were in flight before them also turned back to attack them from the front. This turned the scale of the battle against the Muslims who were put to rout by this unexpected situation. Still there were some brave Muslims who stood firmly in the battle-field. But then a rumour started that the Holy Prophet had been martyred, and his Companions were so stunned by this rumour that even those who were standing firm in the battle-field lost heart and only a dozen or so of the devoted ones were left with him. Thus it was about to turn into an utter rout, when his Companions heard that, though he was wounded, he was alive. Then they again rallied round him and took him to a safe side of the Mount.

In this connection it is very important to note the strange thing that happened: the Quraish did not make full use of this opportunity but marched back to Makkah instead. This is an enigma, for, if they had pursued their success to complete victory, nothing would have checked them, because the Muslims had been so utterly routed that they could not have given them a battle.

95. The two groups were Banū Salmah and Banū Ḥārithah who had wavered in their minds at the desertion of 'Abdullah bin Ubayy, the hypocrite, and his 300 followers.

96. The Holy Prophet heartened the Muslims with this promise when they were disheartened to confront an army of 3,000 men with a small army of 1,000 which was further reduced to 700 men by the desertion of 300 hypocrites.

97. These verses were an answer to the curse which the Holy Prophet called on his enemies: when he was wounded in the battle, he involuntarily invoked evil upon his enemies and said, "How can that community prosper which wounds the Prophet?"

98. The main cause of the setback at Uḥd was the greed for wealth shown by the Muslims. They were so overpowered by the lust for booty, that, instead of pursuing their initial success to victory, they got engaged in looting the spoils. This is why the All-Wise Allah has struck at interest, the root cause of the evils and prohibited it. For it is a common experience that those who lend money on interest become so absorbed in it, that day and night they think of nothing but increasing their un-earned profits and this naturally increases their greed for money.

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كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِيْنَ ﴿137﴾ هٰذَا بَيَانٌ لِّلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَّمَوْعِظَةٌ
لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿138﴾ وَلَا تَهِنُوْا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوْا وَاَنْتُمُ الْاَعْلَوْنَ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿139﴾
اِنْ يَّمْسَسْكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ مِّثْلُهٗ ؕ وَتِلْكَ الْاَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا
بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ۚ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَآءَ ؕ وَ
اللّٰهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿140﴾ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَيَمْحَقَ
الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿141﴾ اَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ اَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ
جٰهَدُوْا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ﴿142﴾ وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ مِنْ
قَبْلِ اَنْ تَلْقَوْهُ ۖ فَقَدْ رَاَيْتُمُوْهُ وَاَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُوْنَ ﴿143﴾ وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ اِلَّا
رَسُوْلٌ ۚ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ ؕ اَفَاۡئِنْ مَّاتَ اَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ
عَلٰٓى اَعْقَابِكُمْ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّنْقَلِبْ عَلٰى عَقِبَيْهِ فَلَنْ يَّضُرَّ اللّٰهَ شَيْـًٔا ؕ وَ
سَيَجْزِى اللّٰهُ الشّٰكِرِيْنَ ﴿144﴾ وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ اَنْ تَمُوْتَ اِلَّا بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ
كِتٰبًا مُّؤَجَّلًا ؕ وَمَنْ يُّرِدْ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهٖ مِنْهَا ۚ وَمَنْ يُّرِدْ ثَوَابَ
الْاٰخِرَةِ نُؤْتِهٖ مِنْهَا ؕ وَسَنَجْزِى الشّٰكِرِيْنَ ﴿145﴾ وَكَاَيِّنْ مِّنْ نَّبِيٍّ قٰتَلَ ۙ
مَعَهٗ رِبِّيُّوْنَ كَثِيْرٌ ۚ فَمَا وَهَنُوْا لِمَآ اَصَابَهُمْ فِىْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَمَا
ضَعُفُوْا وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوْا ؕ وَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ﴿146﴾ وَمَا كَانَ قَوْلَهُمْ
اِلَّآ اَنْ قَالُوْا رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوْبَنَا وَاِسْرَافَنَا فِىْٓ اَمْرِنَا وَثَبِّتْ
اَقْدَامَنَا وَانْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿147﴾ فَاٰتٰىهُمُ اللّٰهُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا وَ
حُسْنَ ثَوَابِ الْاٰخِرَةِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿148﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِنْ
تُطِيْعُوا الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا يَرُدُّوْكُمْ عَلٰٓى اَعْقَابِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوْا خٰسِرِيْنَ ﴿149﴾ بَلِ

As for those who treated (the Divine Revelations) as false, traverse the land and see for yourselves the wretched end of such people, who lived during the eras before your time. This is a clear warning for the people and guidance and admonition for those who fear Allah. 137-138

Be not faint hearted and be not sorrowful, you will surely gain the upper hand, if you be true believers. If you have received a blow now, your enemy also received a similar blow.[100] These are the vicissitudes of time that We alternate among the people; this has been done so that Allah may test from among you who were believers and choose the righteous witnesses of the Truth;[101] for Allah does not like the workers of iniquity—and by this test He willed to sort out true believers and to crush down the disbelievers. Do you think that you will enter Paradise without undergoing any trial? Allah has not yet tried you to see who among you are ready to lay down your lives in His way and who will show fortitude for His sake. You used to long for death but that was before you confronted it. Well, now it has come before you, and you have seen it with your own eyes.[102] 139-143

Muḥammad is no more than a Messenger: other Messengers have already passed before him: if, then, he also dies or is slain, will you then turn about on your heels?[103] Remember, he, who turns about on his heels, will do no harm at all to Allah; of course Allah will duly reward those who live as His grateful servants. 144

No human being can ever die save by Allah's leave, and the time of death has been pre-ordained.[104] Whoso makes efforts with the intention of the reward of this world, We will reward him in this world, and whoso makes efforts with the intention of the reward of the Hereafter will get it[105] and We will certainly reward the grateful servants.[106] Before this have passed many such Prophets in whose company large bands of worshippers of Allah have fought (in His way); they never lost heart during the adversities that befell them in the way of Allah; nor did they show any weakness; nor did they submit (to falsehood:[107]) Allah likes the people who show fortitude. Their only prayer was: "Our Lord, forgive our errors and shortcomings; pardon us the excesses we have committed in our affairs; make our footings secure and hold us firm against the disbelievers." Whereupon Allah gave them the rewards of this world 145-148

and also the better rewards of the Next World: Allah likes only those people who do good deeds.

149 O Believers, if you follow the counsel of those who have adopted the way of disbelief, they will cause you to turn back to unbelief[108] and you will be the losers.

Contd. from p.271]

99. The devouring of interest had created greed, avarice, parsimony and selfishness in those who took interest; hatred, anger, enmity and jealousy in those who had to pay it, and these moral evils contributed to some extent to the setback in the Battle of Uḥd. Therefore Allah has condemned and prohibited interest and prescribed charity as an antidote to it. It is obvious that Paradise has been reserved for those who practise charity and spend money generously, and not for those greedy persons who practise money-lending on interest. (Please refer also to E. N. 320, Al-Baqarah.)

100. God is encouraging the Muslims by mentioning the victory in the battle of Badr, saying, "When the disbelievers did not lose heart by the blow at Badr, why should you, the believers, lose heart by the blow at Uḥd?"

101. The original Arabic text may imply either of the two things: "Allah desired to give some of you the honour of martyrdom." Or it may mean, "He willed to winnow the Believers from the hypocrites so that the true witnesses of the Truth, who may really be worthy of performing the mission that has been assigned to the Muslim Community, may be distinguished from the false ones."

102. This alludes to those who were so desirous of martyrdom that they had persuaded the Holy Prophet against his wish to go out of Al-Madīnah to fight with the enemy.

103. This is the answer to the mischievous talk of those hypocrites who had accompanied the Muslims in the battle of Uḥd. When the rumour spread that the Holy Prophet had been slain, naturally the true Muslims lost heart, but the hypocrites began to say, "Let us go to 'Abdullah bin Ubayy and request him to obtain amnesty for us from Abu Sufyān." Others who were more impudent, went even so far as to say, "If Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him) had been a true Prophet of Allah, he could not have been slain. Let us now turn to our ancestral Faith." Allah rebukes them as if to say, "Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him) is a Prophet, and is mortal like other Prophets who came before him: therefore, if your attachment to Islam is because of the person of Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him), and if it stands on such flimsy ground that with his death you will again return to disbelief, then Allah's religion does not stand in need of you."

This verse was also meant to impress that Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was mortal like all other Prophets. According to a tradition, on the morning when the Prophet died, Abu Bakr came into the mosque at Al-Madinah and found the people all distracted, and 'Umar telling them that it was a sin to say that he was dead. Abu Bakr went and ascertained the truth, and coming back into the mosque, cried, "Lo! as for him who worshipped Muḥammad, Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him) is dead, but as for him who worships Allah, Allah is alive and does not die." Then he recited this verse "and it was as if the people had not known till then that such a verse had been revealed."

104. This is meant to teach the Muslims that fleeing from fear of death will be of no avail, because none shall die a moment before the time ordained for death by Allah, nor can one live a moment after it. Therefore, what one should care for, is not how to escape from death but how best to spend the time that has been given in this world. The important question is this: Is it to be spent for the sake of this worldly life or for the Life-after-death?

105. As the consequences of all actions follow them inevitably, the most important question from the Islamic point of view is whether one's struggle in life is to be directed towards the transitory interests and enjoyments of this world or towards the ever-lasting joys of the Next World. The answer to this will determine one's moral attitude in regard to good and evil.

106. "Grateful servants" are those people who appreciate fully the blessings of Allah, which He has bestowed upon them by giving them the correct answer to the question posed in E. N. 105. He has informed them that there is a limitless life beyond the limited life of this world and that the consequences of the actions of this life are not confined to this life alone, but follow inevitably in the Life-after-death. Hence he is really a grateful servant who trusts in God's promise of sure reward of good deeds in the Next World, and then goes on performing those deeds, disregarding whether his deeds flourish in this life or produce the reverse results. On the other hand, those people are ungrateful who are not ready and willing to spend their time or money or energy on anything that is not expected to produce immediate "good" results in this world. They are ungrateful because they do not appreciate the correct knowledge which has been bestowed by God about the consequences which inevitably follow in the everlasting life in the Next World.

107. That is, "They did not surrender to the worshippers of falsehood, even though they were less in number and worse off in equipment than their enemies."

[Contd. on p. 282

اللّٰهُ مَوْلٰىكُمْ ۚ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ النّٰصِرِيْنَ ﴿١٥٠﴾ سَنُلْقِيْ فِيْ قُلُوْبِ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوا
الرُّعْبَ بِمَآ اَشْرَكُوْا بِاللّٰهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهٖ سُلْطٰنًا ۚ وَمَاْوٰىهُمُ النَّارُ ۭ
وَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿١٥١﴾ وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَعْدَهٗٓ اِذْ تَحُسُّوْنَهُمْ
بِاِذْنِهٖ ۚ حَتّٰٓى اِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي الْاَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ مَآ
اَرٰىكُمْ مَّا تُحِبُّوْنَ ۭ مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُّرِيْدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُّرِيْدُ الْاٰخِرَةَ ۚ ثُمَّ
صَرَفَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ ۚ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ ذُوْ فَضْلٍ عَلَى
الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١٥٢﴾ اِذْ تُصْعِدُوْنَ وَلَا تَلْوٗنَ عَلٰٓى اَحَدٍ وَّالرَّسُوْلُ يَدْعُوْكُمْ
فِيْٓ اُخْرٰىكُمْ فَاَثَابَكُمْ غَمًّۢا بِغَمٍّ لِّكَيْلَا تَحْزَنُوْا عَلٰي مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا مَآ
اَصَابَكُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٥٣﴾ ثُمَّ اَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ الْغَمِّ
اَمَنَةً نُّعَاسًا يَّغْشٰى طَاۗىِٕفَةً مِّنْكُمْ ۙ وَطَاۗىِٕفَةٌ قَدْ اَهَمَّتْهُمْ اَنْفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّوْنَ
بِاللّٰهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ ۭ يَقُوْلُوْنَ هَلْ لَّنَا مِنَ الْاَمْرِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۭ
قُلْ اِنَّ الْاَمْرَ كُلَّهٗ لِلّٰهِ ۭ يُخْفُوْنَ فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِهِمْ مَّا لَا يُبْدُوْنَ لَكَ ۭ يَقُوْلُوْنَ
لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْاَمْرِ شَيْءٌ مَّا قُتِلْنَا هٰهُنَا ۭ قُلْ لَّوْ كُنْتُمْ فِيْ بُيُوْتِكُمْ
لَبَرَزَ الَّذِيْنَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ اِلٰى مَضَاجِعِهِمْ ۚ وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللّٰهُ مَا فِيْ
صُدُوْرِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِيْ قُلُوْبِكُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ﴿١٥٤﴾
اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعٰنِ ۙ اِنَّمَا اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ
بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوْا ۚ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ حَلِيْمٌ ﴿١٥٥﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا
الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَقَالُوْا لِاِخْوَانِهِمْ اِذَا ضَرَبُوْا فِي
الْاَرْضِ اَوْ كَانُوْا غُزًّى لَّوْ كَانُوْا عِنْدَنَا مَا مَاتُوْا وَمَا قُتِلُوْا ۚ لِيَجْعَلَ

(What they are saying is quite wrong :) the fact is that Allah is your Protector and Helper and He is the best of all Helpers. The time is coming when We will cast awe into the hearts of the rejecters of the Truth: this is because they have set up with Allah partners, for whom He has sent no authority. Hell shall be their final abode and wretched indeed is the dwelling place of the workers of iniquity. 150-151

Allah did fulfil His promise (of help) to you: in the initial stage of the battle, it was you who were killing them by Allah's leave until you lost heart and disputed about your duty and disobeyed your leader, when Allah showed you what (the spoils) you coveted,[108a]—for there were among you some who hankered after the life of this world, and others, who cherished the Life-after-death. Then Allah caused your retreat before the disbelievers in order to test you, but the fact is that even then Allah pardoned[109] you, for Allah is very gracious to the believers. 152

Recall how you were fleeing in such a panic that you did not even look back at one another, and the Messenger in your rear was calling out to you.[110] Consequently, Allah inflicted upon you one sorrow after the other[111] so that you may learn this lesson for the future that you should not grieve for what you have lost and for any misfortune that might befall you: Allah is fully aware of all that you are doing. 153

Then after this grief, Allah sent down upon some of you such a sense of peace and security that they began to drowse,[112] but the others, who attached importance only to their own worldly interests, began to cherish about Allah thoughts of ignorance which were void of truth. Now they ask, "Have we also a say in the conduct of affairs?" Say, ("No one has share in this.) The authority over the affairs rests wholly with Allah." In fact they are not disclosing to you what they are concealing in their hearts: what they really mean is this: "If we had a say (in the conduct of) the affairs, none of us would have been slain here." Tell them, "Even though you had remained in your houses, those, who were destined to be slain, would have gone forth of their own accord to the places where they were destined to be slain." And all this happened so that Allah may test that which was hidden in your hearts, and sort out the base thing from your hearts. Allah is fully aware of what is in the hearts. 154

اللّٰهُ ذٰلِكَ حَسْرَةً فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ يُحْيٖ وَيُمِيْتُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ
بَصِيْرٌ ﴿١٥٦﴾ وَلَئِنْ قُتِلْتُمْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ اَوْ مُتُّمْ لَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَرَحْمَةٌ
خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُوْنَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ وَلَئِنْ مُّتُّمْ اَوْ قُتِلْتُمْ لَاِ اِلَى اللّٰهِ تُحْشَرُوْنَ ﴿١٥٨﴾ فَبِمَا
رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيْظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوْا مِنْ
حَوْلِكَ ۪ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْاَمْرِ ۚ فَاِذَا عَزَمْتَ
فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِيْنَ ﴿١٥٩﴾ اِنْ يَّنْصُرْكُمُ اللّٰهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ
لَكُمْ ۚ وَاِنْ يَّخْذُلْكُمْ فَمَنْ ذَا الَّذِيْ يَنْصُرُكُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِهٖ ؕ وَعَلَى اللّٰهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ
الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿١٦٠﴾ وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ اَنْ يَّغُلَّ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّغْلُلْ يَاْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ
يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۚ ثُمَّ تُوَفّٰى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُوْنَ ﴿١٦١﴾ اَفَمَنِ
اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَ اللّٰهِ كَمَنْۢ بَآءَ بِسَخَطٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَمَاْوٰىهُ جَهَنَّمُ ؕ وَبِئْسَ
الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿١٦٢﴾ هُمْ دَرَجٰتٌ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ بَصِيْرٌۢ بِمَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٦٣﴾ لَقَدْ
مَنَّ اللّٰهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اِذْ بَعَثَ فِيْهِمْ رَسُوْلًا مِّنْ اَنْفُسِهِمْ
يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ ۚ وَاِنْ كَانُوْا
مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِيْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿١٦٤﴾ اَوَلَمَّاۤ اَصَابَتْكُمْ مُّصِيْبَةٌ قَدْ اَصَبْتُمْ
مِّثْلَيْهَا ۙ قُلْتُمْ اَنّٰى هٰذَا ؕ قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اَنْفُسِكُمْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿١٦٥﴾ وَمَاۤ اَصَابَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعٰنِ فَبِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ
الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١٦٦﴾ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِيْنَ نَافَقُوْا ۚ وَقِيْلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا قَاتِلُوْا فِيْ
سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ اَوِ ادْفَعُوْا ؕ قَالُوْا لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا لَّا اتَّبَعْنٰكُمْ ؕ هُمْ لِلْكُفْرِ
يَوْمَئِذٍ اَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْاِيْمَانِ ۚ يَقُوْلُوْنَ بِاَفْوَاهِهِمْ مَّا لَيْسَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ ؕ

الصف

As for those of you who turned their backs on the day the two hosts met, they failed in their duty because Satan had exploited some of their weaknesses and made their footing insecure. Nevertheless Allah pardoned them, for Allah is indeed Forgiving and Forbearing. 155

O Believers, do not behave like disbelievers: when their brethren are on a journey or take part in a battle, (and ever meet with some accident) they say, "Had they stayed with us they would not have died nor would have been slain." Allah makes such things[113] a cause of grief and anguish in their hearts: for in fact, it is Allah who ordains both life and death; Allah is watching all that you do. If you are slain or die in the way of Allah, you will get Allah's forgiveness and mercy which are far better than all the things they amass. Anyhow, you shall be gathered together before Allah whether you die or are slain. 156-158

(O Messenger,) it is a great mercy of Allah that you are very gentle and lenient towards them: for, had you been harsh and hard-hearted, they all would have broken away from you: so pardon them and implore Allah to forgive them, and take counsel with them in the conduct of the affairs; then, when once you make up your mind (to do a thing), trust in Allah (and do it). Allah likes those who trust in Him in whatever they do. If Allah helps you, no power can overcome you, and if He forsakes you, who is there, then, after Him to help you? Therefore, true believers should trust in Allah alone. 159-160

It is not conceivable that a Prophet should ever commit breach of trust,[114] for whoso breaks His trust shall bring forth with him on the Day of Resurrection that which he had misappropriated. Then everyone shall be recompensed in full for what one earned, and none shall be dealt with unjustly. How can then it be conceivable that the one, who always follows Allah's will, should behave like the one who incurs Allah's wrath and is ultimately doomed to Hell, which is the most abominable abode? These two types of people have, in the sight of Allah, ranks of far different grades, for Allah is watching what they are doing. As a matter of fact, it is the great favour of Allah to the Believers that He has raised up in their midst from among themselves a Messenger who recites to them His Revelations, purifies their lives and teaches them the Book and Wisdom, though before this these very people had been in manifest error. 161-164

وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُوْنَ ﴿167﴾ اَلَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْا لِاِخْوَانِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوْا لَوْ اَطَاعُوْنَا
مَا قُتِلُوْا ۭ قُلْ فَادْرَءُوْا عَنْ اَنْفُسِكُمُ الْمَوْتَ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿168﴾ وَلَا
تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِيْنَ قُتِلُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ اَمْوَاتًا ۭ بَلْ اَحْيَاۗءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ
يُرْزَقُوْنَ ﴿169﴾ فَرِحِيْنَ بِمَآ اٰتٰىهُمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ ۙ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُوْنَ بِالَّذِيْنَ
لَمْ يَلْحَقُوْا بِهِمْ مِّنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ۙ اَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿170﴾
يَسْتَبْشِرُوْنَ بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَفَضْلٍ ۙ وَّاَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُضِيْعُ اَجْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿171﴾
اَلَّذِيْنَ اسْتَجَابُوْا لِلّٰهِ وَالرَّسُوْلِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَآ اَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ ۚ لِلَّذِيْنَ
اَحْسَنُوْا مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّقَوْا اَجْرٌ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿172﴾ اَلَّذِيْنَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ اِنَّ النَّاسَ
قَدْ جَمَعُوْا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ اِيْمَانًا ۖ وَّقَالُوْا حَسْبُنَا اللّٰهُ وَنِعْمَ
الْوَكِيْلُ ﴿173﴾ فَانْقَلَبُوْا بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَفَضْلٍ لَّمْ يَمْسَسْهُمْ سُوْۗءٌ ۙ وَّ
اتَّبَعُوْا رِضْوَانَ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ ذُوْ فَضْلٍ عَظِيْمٍ ﴿174﴾ اِنَّمَا ذٰلِكُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ
يُخَوِّفُ اَوْلِيَاۗءَهٗ ۠ فَلَا تَخَافُوْهُمْ وَخَافُوْنِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿175﴾ وَلَا يَحْزُنْكَ
الَّذِيْنَ يُسَارِعُوْنَ فِي الْكُفْرِ ۚ اِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يَّضُرُّوا اللّٰهَ شَيْـــًٔا ۭ يُرِيْدُ اللّٰهُ اَلَّا
يَجْعَلَ لَهُمْ حَظًّا فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿176﴾ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اشْتَرَوُا
الْكُفْرَ بِالْاِيْمَانِ لَنْ يَّضُرُّوا اللّٰهَ شَيْـــًٔا ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ﴿177﴾ وَلَا
يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اَنَّمَا نُمْلِيْ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لِّاَنْفُسِهِمْ ۭ اِنَّمَا نُمْلِيْ لَهُمْ
لِيَزْدَادُوْٓا اِثْمًا ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِيْنٌ ﴿178﴾ مَا كَانَ اللّٰهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ
عَلٰي مَآ اَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ حَتّٰى يَمِيْزَ الْخَبِيْثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ ۭ وَمَا كَانَ اللّٰهُ
لِيُطْلِعَكُمْ عَلَي الْغَيْبِ وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَجْتَبِيْ مِنْ رُّسُلِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ ۠ فَاٰمِنُوْا

And how is it that, when a disaster befell you, you exclaimed, 165-168
"Whence is this?"[115] You yourselves had (in the battle of Badr) inflicted twice as great a disaster (on your enemy).[116] O Prophet, say to them, "You yourselves have brought about this disaster upon yourselves."[117] Allah has, indeed, power over everything.[118] It was by Allah's leave that you suffered the loss on the day the two armies met so that Allah might test the true believers and also the hypocrites. When these hypocrites were told to come and fight in the way of Allah or at least in the defence (of their city), they said, "Had we known that the fighting would take place today, we would have certainly gone out with you."[119] At the time they were uttering these words, they were nearer to unbelief than to faith, for they utter with their tongues what is not in their hearts; but Allah knows well what they conceal in their hearts. These are the very people who, while they themselves stayed at home, said of their brethren, who had gone to the battle and had been slain, "If they had obeyed us, they would not have been slain." Tell them, "If you really believe in what you say, you should turn away your own death, when it comes to you."

Do not regard as dead those who have been slain in the way of 169-171
Allah; nay, they are really alive[120] and are well provided for by their Lord. They rejoice in what Allah with His bounty has given them,[121] and they are happy to think that there is nothing to fear or to grieve also for those believers whom they have left behind and who have not yet joined them. They feel happy to have received the reward and the bounty of Allah and they have come to know that most surely Allah does not let go to waste the reward of the Believers.

As for those, who responded to the call of Allah and His 172-175
Messenger even after receiving the injury[122] there will be a great reward for such of those who do righteous works and refrain from evil and who,[123] when the people said to them, "Big armies have gathered against you: so fear them," became more firm in their Faith, and answered, "Allah is all sufficient for us, for He is the best Protector." Ultimately they returned home with the blessing and grace of Allah; they did not suffer any harm at all. Besides this, they had the honour of following what pleased Allah, and Allah's bounty is infinite. (Now you must have realized that) it was Satan who was frightening the people with the fear of his friends; therefore in future do not fear men but fear

Me, if you are true believers.[124]

176-178 (O Messenger,) let not the mischievous activities of those, who are striving today in the way of unbelief, grieve you; they can do absolutely no harm to Allah: thus Allah intends that they should not have any share in the Hereafter, and there is a very severe punishment in store for them. Those, who are bartering away faith for unbelief, are surely doing no harm to Allah: a grievous torment awaits them. Let not the disbelievers think that the respite We are giving them is good for themselves; as a matter of fact, We are giving them respite so that they might gather a heavy burden of sins for themselves; then there shall be disgraceful punishment for them.

Contd. from p.275]

108. That is, "They will take you back to the state of un-belief from which you had come out." This warning was timely because after the reverse at Uḥd, the hypocrites and the Jews tried to seduce the Muslims from their Faith. Their fallacious reasoning was like this: "Had Muḥammad been a Prophet, he would never have suffered a defeat. It is obvious from this that he is an ordinary man who gets victory one day and suffers defeat another day. It is sheer propaganda that Allah had given him any promise of help and success."

108a. This refers to the conduct of the archers. When they were commanded to abstain from taking spoils, they argued with and disobeyed their leader and deserted their positions with the result that the scales of victory were turned against the Muslims.

109. That is, "Your desertion was an act which would have resulted in your total destruction, if Allah had not pardoned you. It was God's grace and succour that saved you from its grave consequences, and the Quraish, in spite of their victory, retreated of their own accord without any apparent reason."

110. It was the courage and firmness of the Holy Prophet that saved the situation from utter ruin in the confusion caused by the sudden attack of the enemy who was charging from the front and from the rear. When some of the Muslims were fleeing towards Al-Madinah and the others were climbing up the Uḥd, the Holy Prophet stood firm and resolute at his post with a dozen or so of his Companions who had stood the test. He was rallying those who were taking to flight, calling out, "O servants of Allah, come to me."

111. Sorrow was caused by the reverse and by the rumour that the Holy Prophet had been martyred and by the loss of their companions and by the misery of their wounded and by the insecurity of their homes and by the fear that the

116. In the battle of Uḥd, 70 Muslims were martyred whereas in the battle of Badr, 70 disbelievers were killed and 70 taken as prisoners.

117. That is, "It is the result of your own weakness and wrong acts; you did not show patience; you did things which were against piety; you disobeyed the order of your leader; you became victims of greed and you got engaged in disputes among yourselves; still you ask, "Where has this disaster come from?"

118. That is, "Allah is able to give victory and is also able to bring about defeat."

119. This was the pretext with which 'Abdullah bin Ubayy returned to Al-Madīnah with his 300 men from his way to the battlefield. When the Muslims perceived that he was about to desert the Muslim army, they tried to persuade him to accompany them but he replied, "We are quite certain that there will be no battle today. That is why we are returning home; we would have most surely accompanied you, if we had expected any battle today."

120. Please refer to E. N. 155, Al-Baqarah.

121. It has been explained by the Holy Prophet in the Tradition cited in *Musnad-i-Ahmad:* "One, who enters the Next World with good deeds, is blessed by Allah with such a cheerful and joyful life that he never wishes to return to this world, but the case of a martyr is different. He does wish that he should again be sent to this world so that he may again enjoy the pleasure, joy and exultation that he felt at the time of laying down his life in the way of Allah."

122. This verse alludes to those devoted servants of Islam who willingly accompanied the Holy Prophet in his pursuit of the Quraish at that critical juncture.

After the Battle of Uḥd, the Quraish marched back towards Makkah. When they had covered a good deal of distance from Al-Madīnah, they realized that they had not utilised the golden opportunity of crushing the power of Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and they began to regret: what a folly have we committed by losing that excellent chance! Accordingly, they halted and held a council of war: Though they were in favour of returning to Al-Madīnah and making a sudden attack, yet they could not muster up courage and continued their march towards Makkah. At the same time, the Holy Prophet surmised an attack from the enemy; so he assembled the Muslims on the next day after the battle of Uḥd and said, "Let us go in pursuit of the Quraish." Although that was a very critical situation, yet the believers and the devoted servants of Allah responded to the call and willingly marched with the Holy Prophet to Hamra-ul-Asad, a place at a distance of 8 miles from Al-Madīnah.

123. VV. 173-175 were sent down a year after the Battle of Uhd, but have been included in this discourse because they deal with the events which are connected with the same.

124. This refers to the terrifying rumours which were being spread in Al-Madīnah. On the occasion of his return from Uḥd, Abū Sufyan had challenged the Muslims to a fight the following year at Badr. But when the time approached, he could not find courage on account of the famine that was raging in Makkah. So in order to save face, he tried to shift on to the Muslims the responsibility for the postponement. Accordingly, he sent a special spy to Al-Madīnah to terrify them by spreading rumours that the Quraish were making great preparations for war and collecting such a large army as could defeat any army in Arabia. This device of Abū Sufyan succeeded in producing the desired panic. When the Holy Prophet made an appeal to the Muslims to meet the Quraish in combat at Badr, it failed to produce any encouraging response. So much so that the Messenger of Allah had to declare before the gathered assembly, "I will go to the combat all alone, if none else is willing to go." It was then that 1,500 devotees volunteered to accompany him, and he reached Badr with them. From the other side, Abū Sufyan left Makkah with an army of 2,000 men. But after two days' journey, he told his men that it did not appear to suit them to have a fight that year, and that they would come next year for it. Accordingly, he returned to Makkah with his men. The Holy Prophet, however, waited for him at Badr for eight days. During these days, his Companions did profitable business with a trading party. Then he came to know that the disbelievers had gone back to Makkah, and he returned to Al-Madīnah.

[Contd.on p. 290

بِاللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖ ۚ وَاِنْ تُؤْمِنُوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا فَلَكُمْ اَجْرٌ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿179﴾ وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ
الَّذِيْنَ يَبْخَلُوْنَ بِمَآ اٰتٰىهُمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ۭ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ
لَّهُمْ ۭ سَيُطَوَّقُوْنَ مَا بَخِلُوْا بِهٖ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۭ وَلِلّٰهِ مِيْرَاثُ السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَالْاَرْضِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ﴿180﴾ لَقَدْ سَمِعَ اللّٰهُ قَوْلَ الَّذِيْنَ
قَالُوْٓا اِنَّ اللّٰهَ فَقِيْرٌ وَّنَحْنُ اَغْنِيَاۗءُ ۘ سَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَالُوْا وَقَتْلَهُمُ
الْاَنْۢبِيَاۗءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ ۙ وَّنَقُوْلُ ذُوْقُوْا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيْقِ ﴿181﴾ ذٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ
اَيْدِيْكُمْ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيْدِ ﴿182﴾ الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَهِدَ
اِلَيْنَآ اَلَّا نُؤْمِنَ لِرَسُوْلٍ حَتّٰى يَاْتِيَنَا بِقُرْبَانٍ تَاْكُلُهُ النَّارُ ۭ قُلْ قَدْ
جَاۗءَكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِيْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ وَبِالَّذِيْ قُلْتُمْ فَلِمَ قَتَلْتُمُوْهُمْ اِنْ
كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿183﴾ فَاِنْ كَذَّبُوْكَ فَقَدْ كُذِّبَ رُسُلٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ جَاۗءُوْ
بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ وَالزُّبُرِ وَالْكِتٰبِ الْمُنِيْرِ ﴿184﴾ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَاۗىِٕقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۭ وَاِنَّمَا
تُوَفَّوْنَ اُجُوْرَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۭ فَمَنْ زُحْزِحَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَاُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ
فَقَدْ فَازَ ۭ وَمَا الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَآ اِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُوْرِ ﴿185﴾ لَتُبْلَوُنَّ فِيْٓ اَمْوَالِكُمْ
وَاَنْفُسِكُمْ ۣ وَلَتَسْمَعُنَّ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ
الَّذِيْنَ اَشْرَكُوْٓا اَذًى كَثِيْرًا ۭ وَاِنْ تَصْبِرُوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا فَاِنَّ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ
عَزْمِ الْاُمُوْرِ ﴿186﴾ وَاِذْ اَخَذَ اللّٰهُ مِيْثَاقَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهٗ
لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُوْنَهٗ ۡ فَنَبَذُوْهُ وَرَاۗءَ ظُهُوْرِهِمْ وَاشْتَرَوْا بِهٖ ثَمَنًا
قَلِيْلًا ۭ فَبِئْسَ مَا يَشْتَرُوْنَ ﴿187﴾ لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَفْرَحُوْنَ بِمَآ اَتَوْا وَّ
يُحِبُّوْنَ اَنْ يُّحْمَدُوْا بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوْا فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّهُمْ بِمَفَازَةٍ مِّنَ

ع ۱۹ ۲ ۱۰ وقف لازم

Allah will not leave the Believers in the state in which you happened to be at present;[125] He will surely separate the pure from the impure people but Allah will not do this by disclosing the unseen to you.[126] As for disclosing the unseen, He chooses those of His Messengers He pleases; therefore put your faith in Allah and His Messenger (regarding the unseen) for there shall be a big reward for you, if you follow the way of faith in Allah and fear Him. 179

Let not those whom Allah has blessed with His bounty and are behaving in a niggardly manner think it to be good for themselves; nay, it is very bad for them. Whatever they are hoarding parsimoniously shall be hung round their necks like a collar on the Day of Resurrection; for Allah alone will inherit all that is in the heaven and the earth[127] and He is fully aware of what you are doing. 180

Allah has heard the saying of those who said; "Allah is poor and we are rich."[128] We will record this (in their Conduct Book) along with their previous record of unjust killing of their Prophets. And (on the Day of Judgment), We will say to them, "Now taste the torment of the burning Fire. This is for what you earned with your own hands. Allah is not unjust to His servants." 181-182

There are those who say "Allah has enjoined us that we should not accept anyone as a Messenger unless he offers, in our presence, a sacrifice which fire from heaven should devour." Say to them, "Many Messengers came to you before me with clear Signs, and they brought also the Sign you speak of: if you are sincere (in your demand), why did you kill those Messengers?"[129] If they now charge you with imposture, O Muhammad, before you they treated as impostors many a Messenger who came with clear Signs, and with Scriptures and light-giving Books. Since every being shall taste death, all of you shall get your full recompense on the Day of Resurrection. Then only that one will be truly successful, who escapes from the Hell-fire and is admitted to the Garden. As regards the life of this world, it is (as it appears); merely a thing that deceives.[130] 183-185

O Muslims, you shall surely be tried in your possessions and in your selves; you shall hear many hurtful things from those who were given the Book before you and from those who associate other gods with Allah. But if you show fortitude, and fear Allah under all

الْعَذَابِ ۝ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝188 وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَ
(19) (5) (10)
اللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝189 إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ
اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيٰتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ۝190 الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللّٰهَ قِيٰمًا
وَّقُعُودًا وَّعَلٰى جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ رَبَّنَا
مَا خَلَقْتَ هٰذَا بَاطِلًا ۚ سُبْحٰنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ۝191 رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ مَنْ
تُدْخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدْ أَخْزَيْتَهُ ۗ وَمَا لِلظّٰلِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ۝192 رَبَّنَآ إِنَّنَا
سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا ۚ رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ
لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّاٰتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ ۝193 رَبَّنَا وَاٰتِنَا مَا
وَعَدْتَّنَا عَلٰى رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۗ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ ۝194
فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَآ أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ
أُنْثٰى ۚ بَعْضُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْضٍ ۚ فَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَ
أُوذُوا فِي سَبِيلِي وَقٰتَلُوا وَقُتِلُوا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّاٰتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ
جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهٰرُ ثَوَابًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ عِنْدَهُ
حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ ۝195 لَا يَغُرَّنَّكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ ۝196 مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ ۖ
ثُمَّ مَأْوٰىهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ۝197 لٰكِنِ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ
جَنّٰتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا نُزُلًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ ۗ وَمَا
عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ خَيْرٌ لِّلْأَبْرَارِ ۝198 وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ لَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَآ
أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَآ أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ خٰشِعِينَ لِلّٰهِ ۙ لَا يَشْتَرُونَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ
ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۗ أُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ۝199

circumstances,[131] this will be (a proof of) constancy of purpose. Remind the people of the Book that Allah made the Covenant with them and enjoined: "You shall spread the teachings of the Book among the peoples and shall not keep these concealed."[132] But they flung the Book behind their backs and bartered it away for paltry worldly gains. What a bad business they are carrying on! Do not think that those, who exult in their misdeeds and who love to be praised even for deeds they have not actually performed,[133] shall escape chastisement; the fact is that a grievous chastisement awaits them; for to Allah belong the earth and the heavens and He has power over each and everything.

In[134] the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are many signs for the people of good sense, who standing and sitting and lying down remember Allah and reflect upon the (wonders) of the structure of the earth and the heavens.[135] (Then they cry out spontaneously,) "Our Lord, Thou, hast not created all this in vain, for Thou art free from doing such a thing. So save us from the torment of the Hell-fire;[136] for, O Lord, surely Thou wilt have abased him, whom Thou wilt cast into Hell-fire; then such workers of iniquity shall have no helper. O Lord, we heard a caller, who invited to the Faith, saying, "Believe in your Lord," and we accepted his invitation;[137] so, our Lord, forgive us our sins and remit our evil deeds and let our end be with the righteous people. Lord, fulfil the promises Thou hast made to us through Thy Messengers and do not put us to shame on the Day of Resurrection, for Thou never goest against Thy promise."[138] 190-194

Their Lord answered their prayer, saying, "I do not let go to waste the labour of any worker from among you whether male or female, for all of you (human beings) are the offspring of one another.[139] I will, therefore, forgive all the shortcomings of those who left their homes or were expelled from them for My sake or were persecuted, and of those who fought for My cause and were slain, and admit them to the Gardens underneath which canals flow." This is their reward from Allah and with Allah alone is the richest reward.[140] 195

Let not the activities of the disbelievers in the countries deceive you, for this is merely a brief enjoyment of this transitory life; then all of them shall go to Hell which is the worst abode. On the other hand, pious people, who fear Allah, will be given Gardens underneath which 196-199

canals flow: therein they will live for ever. This is their hospitality from Allah, and that, which is with Allah is the best for the righteous people. And there are some even among the people of the Book, who believe in Allah and in the Book which has been sent down to you and in the Scripture which was sent down to themselves before this; they humble themselves before Allah and do not barter away Allah's Revelation for paltry worldly gains; they will have their reward from their Lord; for Allah is very swift in settling accounts.

Contd. on p.254]

125. That is, "Allah does not like to see the Believers remaining mixed up with the hypocrites in one and the same Muslim Community."

126. That is, "Allah does not separate the believers from the hypocrites by informing the Muslims that, in their heart of hearts, such and such are hypocrites." He distinguishes true believers from hypocrites by creating such occasions as practically separate the two groups from each other.

127. Everything shall ultimately return to God as His inheritance because it really belongs to God. Whatever is in the possession of any of His creatures is a temporary trust. Everyone in every case shall be dis-possessed of the property and wealth that he calls his own during the short life here and that shall ultimately return to God, the real Owner. Therefore the wise one is he who generously spends Allah's property in Allah's way and the foolish one is he who tries to hoard it.

128. The Jews uttered these words on the occasion of the revelation of verse 245 of Al-Baqarah, "Who is there among you, who will lend to Allah a goodly loan..." They ridiculed this appeal, saying, "Oh, yes! God has been reduced to poverty, and now He is begging His servants for a loan."

129. This was a lie invented and attributed to God by the Jews, for Allah never enjoined such a thing. Though burnt sacrifices have been mentioned in the Bible, these have not been held out as essential signs of true Prophethood. They were merely symbols of the acceptance of sacrifices by God. (Please refer to Judges, 6: 20-21, 13: 19-20, Leviticus, 9: 24, II Chronicles, 7: 1-2).

It is obvious that this demand was merely a pretext for rejecting the Prophethood of Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him). As a further proof of their insincerity, it may be recalled that these enemies of the Truth did not hesitate to slay even some of their own Prophets who showed to them this same Sign of the burnt sacrifice. The case of Elijah may be cited as an instance: "When Ahab did more to vex the Eternal than all the kings of Israel before him, Elijah went to him

and remonstrated that He had ruined Israel by forsaking the Eternal. So Ahab gathered all Israel. Then Elijah told the people to have a couple of bullocks for the test of the burnt sacrifice. Of course, the "Prophets" of Baal failed in the test. Then God's lightning burnt the sacrifice and all Israel witnessed it but even after this they turned against Elijah who had to flee for his life." (For details please refer to I Kings, 18 and 19).

130. The life of this world (as it appears) is a thing that deceives because it helps create false impressions which deceive one about the ultimate results of deeds and misdeeds. One may thus be misled to take apparent prosperity or adversity as the criterion of Truth or falsehood. If one is apparently prosperous in this life, it is wrong to conclude that the one is on the right side and high in God's favour. On the other hand, if another is suffering from misfortunes and is a victim of adversity, it does not necessarily mean that the one is on the wrong side and incurs the disfavour of God. For often the results in this world are just the opposite of those which are to be met with in the Next World. The latter are, however, real and therefore deserve one's greatest consideration.

131. That is, "You should prove the strength of your high character even in the face of provocation by keeping your temper under control. Endure with patience their taunts, derision, accusations and improper words and false propaganda. Do not get exasperated even in the most trying circumstances so as to say or do false, unjust, uncivlized and immoral things."

132. That is, "Remind them of the Covenant that God made with them and of the great mission that was entrusted to them because they had forgotten it, though they did remember the sign of the burnt sacrifices given to some of their Prophets."

The Covenant referred to in this verse has been mentioned many times in the Bible, especially it has been repeated over and over again in Deuteronomy. Prophet Moses exhorted them not to "add unto the word" nor to "diminish aught from it" and to "keep the commandments of the Lord." (4: 2); and to "teach them diligently unto thy children", and to talk of them when thou sittest in their house and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up, write them upon the posts of thy house, and on the gates." (6: 7, 9) In his last will, he urged the elders of Israel to "set up great stones in mount Ebal after crossing the boundary line of Palestine". (27: 2-4).

Here is an instance of their negligence of the Book. Prophet Moses entrusted one copy of the Torah to the Levites and instructed them to recite it word by word every seventh year on the occasion of the Pass-over Festival before a gathering of all Israel-men, women and children. But owing to their gross

negligence of their duty, within seven hundred years of the death of Moses, they had even forgotten that there was such a Book as Torah. So much so that even the high priest of the Temple and the Jewish king of Jerusalem were ignorant of its existence. (II Kings, 22: 8-13)

133. For instance, such people wish to hear people praise them for being very pious, religious, God-fearing servants of the Faith and defenders of the law, when, in fact, they possess none of the characteristics, or they desire that propaganda should be made in their favour that such and such is an embodiment of self-sacrifice, sincerity and honesty and has rendered meritorious services to the community, when in fact, he is quite the opposite of it.

134. From here begins the concluding part of the Sūrah and it has no direct connection with the preceding verses, but with the Sūrah as a whole. Therefore it is worth while to turn to the introduction to this Sūrah to understand this portion.

135. That is, "These Signs can help one understand the Reality, provided that one is not unmindful of God and observes the phenomena of Nature like a thinking person and not like an animal."

136. A close observation of the system of the Universe leads them to the right conclusion that most surely there is a life in the Hereafter with its rewards and punishments. The system itself speaks eloquently of the great wisdom that underlies it, so it follows that the All-Wise Creator must have a definite purpose in the creation of Man. Moreover, the very fact, that He placed everything at man's disposal and has endowed him with a moral sense to discriminate between good and bad, clearly shows that he must be accountable to Him as to whether he had fulfilled that purpose. Consequently he should be rewarded for the good he does in this world and punished for the evil. This thinking leads one to the conclusion that there must be a life-after-death, where one will be accountable for his deeds. This realization fills man's heart with fear of punishment in the Hereafter, and he spontaneously prays to Him to save him from the Hell-fire.

137. In the same way, this observation also convinces right thinking men that the point of view of the Messengers about the beginning and the end of the Universe and the purpose of its creation is the correct one; hence the way of life preached and prescribed by them is the only right way.

138. It does not mean that they have any doubts about the promises of Allah, but this merely shows that they are anxious to know whether they themselves are entitled to the blessings that have been promised. That is why they pray to God, "Our Lord, forgive us—You do not break your promises," for they fear lest they should be ridiculed in the Hereafter by the disbelievers as they were

200 يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اصْبِرُوْا وَ صَابِرُوْا وَ رَابِطُوْا ۟ وَ اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ۝

O Believers, Practice fortitude and show valour in fighting against worshippers of falsehood;[141] be ever prepared for the service of Truth, and always fear Allah: it is expected that you will achieve true success.

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here in this world by such taunts at these; "Look at these people--even their Faith in the Messengers has not saved them from disgrace."

139. That is, "In My sight all of you are alike as human beings and I have the same standards of justice and judgment for all, and men should not forget that women are of the same "human status as they themselves have. I do not discriminate between man and woman, master and slave, the black and the white, the high and the low."

140. There is a Tradition that VV. 190-195 were recited by the Holy Prophet before some non-Muslims who came to him and said, "All the Prophets brought one Sign or the other with them. For instance, Moses had the miraculous staff and his bright hand to show, and Jesus healed the blind and the lepers. Please tell us what sign have you brought us as a proof of your Prophethood." The Holy Prophet recited these verses and said, "I have brought this."

141. The word *ṣābirū* in the original Arabic Text implies two things: Show more valour in fighting for the right cause than that which the disbelievers are showing for a wrong cause." (2) "Vie with one another in showing valour in your fight with the disbelievers."



IV

AN-NISĀ

النِّسَاء

IV

AN-NISĀ

اَلنِّسَاء

INTRODUCTION

Period of Revelation:

This Sūrah comprises several discourses which were revealed on different occasions during the period ranging probably between the end of A.H. 3 and the end of A.H. 4 or the beginning of A.H. 5. Although it is difficult to determine the exact dates of their revelations, yet it is possible to assign to them a fairly correct period with the help of the commandments and the events mentioned therein and the Traditions concerning them. A few instances are given below by way of illustration:

(1) We know that the instructions about the division of inheritance of the martyrs and for the safeguard of the rights of the orphans were sent down after the battle of Uhd in which 70 Muslims were killed. Then naturally the question of the division of the martyrs inheritance and the safeguard of the rights of their orphan children arose in many families at Al-Madīnah. From this we may conclude that vv. 1-28 were revealed on that occasion.

(2) We learn from Traditions that the Commandment about the *Ṣalat* of fear during actual fighting was given on the occasion of the expedition of Dhaṭ ar-Riqā', which took place in A.H. 4. From this we may conclude that the discourse containing verse 102 in which the method of performing this Prayer was prescribed was revealed on that occasion.

(3) The last warning (v. 47) to the Jews was given before the Banī an-Nadīr were exiled from Al-Madīnah in Rabī' al-Awwal, A.H. 4. From this it may safely be concluded that the discourse containing verse 47 must have been revealed some time before that date.

(4) The permission about *tayammum* (performance of ablutions with pure dust, in case no water be available) was given during the expedition against the Banī al-Muṣṭaliq, which took place in A.H. 5. Therefore, the probable date of the revelation of the discourse containing verse 43 was A.H. 5.

Topics and Their Background:

Let us now consider the social and historical considerations of the period in order to understand the Sūrah. All the discourses in this Sūrah deal with three main problems which confronted the Holy Prophet at the time. First of all, he was engaged in bringing about an all round development of the Islamic Community that had been formed at the time of his migration to Al-Madīnah. For this purpose he was introducing new moral, cultural, social, economic and political ways in place of the old ones of the pre-Islamic period. The second thing that occupied his attention and efforts was the bitter struggle that was going on with the *mushrik* Arabs, the Jewish clans and the hypocrites who were opposing tooth and nail his mission of reform. Above all, he had to propagate Islam in the face of the bitter opposition of these powers of evil with a view to capturing more and more minds and hearts.

Accordingly, detailed instructions have been given for the consolidation and strengthening of the Islamic Community in continuation of those given in Al-Baqarah. Principles for the smooth running of family life have been laid down and ways of settling family disputes have been taught. Rules have been prescribed for marriage and rights of wife and husband have been apportioned fairly and equitably. The status of women in the society has been determined and the declaration of the rights of orphans has been made; laws and regulations have been laid down for the division of inheritance, and instructions have been given to reform economic affairs. The foundation of the penal code has been laid down; drinking has been prohibited; and instructions have been given for cleanliness and purity. The Muslims have been taught the kind of relations good men should have with their Allah and fellow men. Instructions have been given for the maintenance of discipline in the Muslim Community.

The moral and religious condition of the people of the Book has been reviewed to teach lessons to the Muslims and to forewarn them to

refrain from following in their footsteps. The conduct of the hypocrites has been criticized and the distinctive features of hypocrisy and true faith have been clearly marked off to enable the Muslims to distinguish between the two.

In order to cope with the aftermath of the battle of Uḥd inspiring discourses were sent down to urge the Muslims to face the enemy bravely, for the defeat in the battle had so emboldened the *mushrik* Arab clans and the neighbouring Jews and the hypocrites at home that they were threatening the Muslims on all sides. At this critical juncture, Allah filled the Muslims with courage and gave them such instructions as were needed during that period of war clouds. In order to counteract the fearful rumours that were being spread by the hypocrites and the Muslims of weak faith, they were asked to make a thorough enquiry into them and to inform the responsible people about them. Then they were experiencing some difficulties in offering their *Ṣalat* during the expeditions to some places where no water was available for performing their ablutions, etc. In such cases they were allowed to cleanse themselves with pure earth and to shorten the *Ṣalat* or to offer the "*Ṣalat* of Fear", when they were faced with danger. Instructions were also given for the solution of the puzzling problem of those Muslims who were scattered among the unbelieving Arab clans and were often involved in war. They were asked to emigrate to Al-Madīnah, the abode of Islam.

This Sūrah also deals with the case of Banī Nadīr, who were showing a hostile and menacing attitude, in spite of the peace treaties they had made with the Muslims. They were openly siding with the enemies of Islam and hatching plots against the Holy Prophet and the Muslim Community even at Al-Madīnah itself. They were taken to task for their inimical behaviour and given a final warning to change their attitude, and were at last exiled from Al-Madīnah on account of their misconduct.

The problem of the hypocrites, who had become very troublesome at that time, was involving the Believers in difficulties. Therefore, they were divided into different categories to enable the Muslims to deal with them appropriately.

Clear instructions were also given regarding the attitude they should adopt towards the non-belligerent clans. The most important thing needed at that time was to prepare the Muslims for the bitter struggle with the opponents of Islam. For this purpose greatest importance was attached to their character building, for it was obvious that the small Muslim Community could only come out successful, nay, survive, if the Muslims possessed high moral character. They were, therefore, enjoined to adopt the highest moral qualities and were severely criticized whenever any moral weakness was detected in them.

Though this Sūrah mainly deals with the moral and social reforms, yet due attention has been paid to propagation of Islam. On the one hand, the superiority of the Islamic morality and culture has been established over that of the Jews, Christians and *mushriks*; on the other hand, their wrong religious conceptions, their wrong morality and their evil acts have been criticized to prepare the ground for inviting them to the way of the Truth.

SUMMARY

SUBJECT: CONSOLIDATION OF THE ISLAMIC COMMUNITY.

The main object of this Sūrah is to teach the Muslims the ways that unite a people and make them firm and strong. Introductions for the stability of family, which is the nucleus of community have been given. Then they have been urged to prepare themselves for defence. Side by side with these, they have been taught the importance of the propagation of Islam. Above all, the importance of the highest moral character in the scheme of consolidation of the Community has been impressed.

Topics and Their Interconnection.

Just, fair and equitable laws and regulations for the smooth running of family life have been laid down for the husband and wife. Detailed instructions have been given for the division of inheritance and due regard has been paid to the rights of orphans. 1-35

In order to inculcate the right spirit for the observance of rules and regulations, the Muslims have been enjoined to show generosity to all around them and to be free from meanness, selfishness, stinginess of mind, because this is essential for the consolidation of the Communities and helpful for the propagation of Islam. 36-42

The ways of the purification of mind and body for the offering of Ṣalāt have been taught because it plays the most important part in every scheme of moral and social reform. 43

After moral preparation, instructions for defence have been given. First of all, the Muslims have been warned to be on their guard against the cunning machinations and vile practices of the local Jews who were hostile to the New Movement. This caution was necessary for removing some possible misunderstanding that might have arisen on account of the pre-Islamic alliance between the people of Al-Madīnah and the Jews. 44-57

58-72 Then they have been enjoined to place their trusts and offices of trust in the custody of honest and qualified persons, and to do what is just and right, and to obey Allah and His Messenger and those among themselves entrusted with the conduct of their affairs and to turn to Allah and His Messenger for the settlement of their disputes. As such an attitude and behaviour alone can ensure consolation, they have been strongly warned that any deviation from this path will lead to their disintegration.

73-100 After this pre-requisite, they have been exhorted to make preparation for defence and to fight bravely for the cause of Islam, without showing any kind of cowardice or weakness. They have also been warned to be on their guard against hypocrites. A line of demarcation has been drawn to distinguish the intentional shirkers from the helpless devotees.

101-103 Here again instructions have been given for the offering of Ṣalāt during military campaigns and actual fighting. This is to impress the importance of Ṣalāt even at the time of fear and danger.

104 Before proceeding on to the next topic, the Muslims have been exhorted to persevere in their fight without showing any kind of weakness.

105-135 In order to make the Islamic Community firm and strong for defence, the Muslims have been enjoined to observe the highest standard of Justice. The Muslims are required to deal out strict Justice even in case of the enemy, with whom they might be involved in war. They should also settle disputes between husband and wife with justice. In order to ensure this, they should keep their beliefs and deeds absolutely free from every kind of impurity and should become the standard bearers of justice.

136-175 Resuming the theme of defence, the Muslims have been warned to be on their guard against their enemies. They have been admonished to take necessary precautions against the machinations of the hypocrites and the unbelievers and the people of the Book. As belief in Allah, and Revelation and Life-after-death is the only safeguard against every kind of enemy, they should sincerely believe

in and follow His Messenger, Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him).

Though this verse also deals with the family laws contained in verses 1-35, it has been added as a supplement at the end of this Sūrah because it was revealed long after An-Nisā was being recited as a complete Sūrah. 176



يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ نَّفْسٍ وَّاحِدَةٍ وَّخَلَقَ مِنْهَا
زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيْرًا وَّنِسَآءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْ تَسَآءَلُوْنَ
بِهٖ وَالْاَرْحَامَ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيْبًا ۝ وَاٰتُوا الْيَتٰمٰٓى اَمْوَالَهُمْ
وَلَا تَتَبَدَّلُوا الْخَبِيْثَ بِالطَّيِّبِ ۠ وَلَا تَاْكُلُوْٓا اَمْوَالَهُمْ اِلٰٓى اَمْوَالِكُمْ ۭ اِنَّهٗ
كَانَ حُوْبًا كَبِيْرًا ۝ وَاِنْ خِفْتُمْ اَلَّا تُقْسِطُوْا فِي الْيَتٰمٰى فَانْكِحُوْا مَا
طَابَ لَكُمْ مِّنَ النِّسَآءِ مَثْنٰى وَثُلٰثَ وَرُبٰعَ ۚ فَاِنْ خِفْتُمْ اَلَّا تَعْدِلُوْا
فَوَاحِدَةً اَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُكُمْ ۭ ذٰلِكَ اَدْنٰٓى اَلَّا تَعُوْلُوْا ۝ وَاٰتُوا النِّسَآءَ
صَدُقٰتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً ۭ فَاِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوْهُ هَنِيْۗـًٔا
مَّرِيْۗـًٔا ۝ وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاۗءَ اَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِيْ جَعَلَ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ قِيٰمًا وَّارْزُقُوْهُمْ
فِيْهَا وَاكْسُوْهُمْ وَقُوْلُوْا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوْفًا ۝ وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتٰمٰى حَتّٰٓى اِذَا
بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ ۚ فَاِنْ اٰنَسْتُمْ مِّنْهُمْ رُشْدًا فَادْفَعُوْٓا اِلَيْهِمْ اَمْوَالَهُمْ ۚ وَلَا
تَاْكُلُوْهَآ اِسْرَافًا وَّبِدَارًا اَنْ يَّكْبَرُوْا ۭ وَمَنْ كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ ۚ وَمَنْ
كَانَ فَقِيْرًا فَلْيَاْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ ۭ فَاِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ اِلَيْهِمْ اَمْوَالَهُمْ فَاَشْهِدُوْا
عَلَيْهِمْ ۭ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ حَسِيْبًا ۝ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيْبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدٰنِ وَ
الْاَقْرَبُوْنَ ۠ وَلِلنِّسَآءِ نَصِيْبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدٰنِ وَالْاَقْرَبُوْنَ مِمَّا قَلَّ
مِنْهُ اَوْ كَثُرَ ۭ نَصِيْبًا مَّفْرُوْضًا ۝ وَاِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ اُولُوا الْقُرْبٰى وَالْيَتٰمٰى

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

IV
ĀN-NISĀ
اَلنِّسَاء

Verses: 176 *Revealed at al-Madīnah*

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

O mankind, fear your Lord, Who created you of a single soul, 1
and of the same created his mate, and from that pair spread countless men and women over the earth;[1] fear that Allah in Whose name you demand your rights from one another, and abstain from violating relations between kinsfolk; note it well that Allah is watching you very closely.

Restore to the orphans their property,[2] and do not exchange 2
your worthless things for their valuable things,[3] and do not devour their property by mixing it up with your own, for it is a great sin.

And if you be apprehensive that you will not be able to do 3
justice to the orphans, you may marry two or three or four women whom you choose.[4] But if you apprehend that you might not be able to do justice to them, then marry only one wife,[5] or marry those women who have fallen in your possession.[6] This will be the better course to avoid injustice.

And give their dowries willingly to women (as an obligation), 4
but if they, of their own accord, remit a portion of the dowry, you may enjoy it with pleasure.[7]

Do not give to the feeble-minded people that property which 5
Allah has made the means of your maintenance: you should however,

provide them with food and clothing and give them good advice.[8]

6 And go on observing and testing the orphans until they reach the marriageable age:[9] then if you perceive that they have become capable, deliver to them their property[10]. Be on your guard against devouring their property unjustly and wastefully and hastily lest they should grow up to demand it. If the guardian of an orphan is rich, let him abstain from the orphan's property, and if poor, let him eat of it fairly.[11] When you hand over to them their property, then have some people to witness it, and Allah suffices as Reckoner.

7 There is a share for men in what has been left by parents and near relatives, and there is a share also for women in what has been left by parents and near relatives, whether it be little or much;[12] for this share has been prescribed (by Allah).

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1. This introduction beautifully suits the subsequent laws and regulations about human rights, specially about the smooth running of the family life. On the one hand, the people have been urged to fear Allah so as to escape His displeasure; on the other, they have been reminded that all human beings have sprung from one and the same parents and are thus closely related to one another. "....He created you of a single soul". At first one human being was created and then from him the human race spread over the earth. Therefore they should strictly observe the ties and obligations of kin-ship. We learn from another part of the Qur'ān that Adam was that "single soul." He was the first Man from whom the whole of mankind sprang up and spread over the earth. "....and of the same created his mate:" We have no definite detailed knowledge of how his mate was created of him. The commentators generally say that Eve was created from the rib of Adam and the Bible also contains the same story. The Talmud adds to it that she was created from the thirteenth rib of Adam. But the Qur'ān is silent about it, and the Tradition of the Holy Prophet that is cited in support of this has a different meaning from what has been understood. The best thing, therefore, is to leave it undefined as it has been left in the Qur'ān, and not to waste time in determining its details.

2. That is, as long "As the orphans are under age, spend their property only in their interest; and when they come of age, return their rightful property to them."

3. This is a comprehensive sentence, which may mean, "Do not make your income unclean in any unlawful way." It may also mean, "Do not exchange your worthless things for the valuable things of the orphans."

4. The commentators ascribe three meanings to this:

(a) Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah says that this was revealed to remedy an evil that was prevalent in the days of "Ignorance." The guardians of the orphan girls used to marry them for their wealth and beauty, with the intention of keeping them under their power because they had no one to defend their cause; then they treated them unjustly without any fear. Therefore when they became Muslims, they had misgivings about marrying orphan girls. Accordingly, the Qur'ān advised them to marry women of their choice other than orphan girls in their charge, if they feared that they would not be able to do justice to them. Verse 127 of this Sūrah also supports this comment.

(b) In commenting on this, Ḥaḍrat Ibn-i-'Abbas and his disciple 'Ikrimah assert that this Commandment was given to eradicate an injustice that was prevalent at that time. In pre-Islamic days, there was no limit to the number of wives and some people would marry even a dozen of them but when they could not meet the increasing expenses, they were forced to grab the property of their orphan nephews and other helpless relatives. Therefore, Allah restricted the maximum number of wives to four, and enjoined that this too, was subject to the condition that one should do justice to all of them.

(c) Sa'id bin Jubair, Qatādah and some other commentators declare that this Command was given to safeguard the interests of wives. They say that even before the advent of Islam, injustice to the orphans was looked upon with disfavour, but in regard to wives, it was different; they would marry as many as they liked and would treat them cruelly and unjustly without any fear of the society or pangs of conscience. Therefore Allah warned them that they should refrain from doing injustice to their wives as they did in the case of the orphans. Therefore they should not marry more than four wives and that too, only if they would do justice to them.

The words of the verse bear all the three meanings and probably all three are meant. Another meaning also can be: "If you cannot treat the orphans justly as they normally should be, you may marry the women who have orphan children."

The consensus of opinion of all the scholars of the Muslim law is that this verse limits the number of wives and prohibits the keeping of more than four at one and the same time. Traditions also support this. It is related that at the time when Ghailan, the chief of Tā'if, became a Muslim, he had nine wives. The Holy Prophet asked him to keep only four of them and divorce all the others. There is another instance of Naufal bin Mu'aviyah, who was ordered by the Holy Prophet to divorce one of his five wives.

It should also be noted that this verse restricts polygamy with the provision of justice to all the wives; therefore whoever abuses this permission without

fulfilling the condition of justice and marries more wives than one tries to deceive Allah. The courts of an Islamic State are, therefore, empowered to enforce justice in order to rectify the wrong done to a wife or wives. At the same time it is absolutely wrong to conclude from the proviso of justice, attached to this Commandment, that this verse was really meant to abolish polygamy. This is not the view of the Qur'ān, but of those Muslims who have been overawed by the Christians of the West. They say that the Qur'ān is also against polygamy but it did not abolish it directly because it did not consider it expedient at the time for the custom had become very common. Instead of this, it allows polygamy provided that justice is done to all the wives. As this condition is most difficult to fulfil, the recommendation is towards monogamy. Obviously, this way of thinking is the result of mental slavery, because polygamy in itself is not an evil for in some cases it becomes a real cultural and moral necessity. There are some people, who, even if they wished, cannot remain content with one wife. Polygamy comes to their rescue and saves them and the society in general from the harms of unlicensed sexual indulgences. That is why the Qur'ān allows polygamy to such people with the explicit condition of doing justice to all the wives.

As regards those who consider polygamy to be an evil, they are free to oppose the Qur'ān and condemn polygamy, but they have no right to ascribe their own perverted views to the Qur'ān, for it makes this lawful in very clear language without employing any words that might be stretched in any way to imply that the Qur'ān means to abolish it. (For further explanation, please consult my book *Sunnat ki A'ini Haithiyyat*, pp. 307-316).

6. "Those women": slavegirls captured in war and distributed among the people by the government. It may either mean: "If you cannot bear the expenses of a free woman, you may marry a slave girl as permitted in v. 25," or it may mean: "If you need more wives than one but are afraid that you might not be able to do justice to your wives from among the free people, you may turn to slave girls because in that case you will be burdened with less responsibilities." (For details please refer to E.N. 44 below).

7. Ḥadrat 'Umar and Qaḍi Shuraih have ruled that if a wife remits the whole of her dowry or a part of it but later on demands it, the husband shall be compelled to pay it because the very fact that she demands it is a clear proof that she did not remit it of her own free will. (For further details, consult my book *Ḥuqūq-uz-Zaujain*, under the caption Dowry).

8. This verse is very comprehensive in meaning. It teaches the Muslim Community the lesson that in no case should wealth, which is so important for the maintenance of life, be entrusted to such people as are feeble-minded and incapable of using or managing it properly, for they might, by its wrong use, spoil its

cultural and economic system and, in the long run, its moral system as well. It is true that the rights of private ownership must be honoured, but at the same time they are not to be so unlimited as to allow one to use them in any way one likes and create social chaos. As far as one's necessities of life are concerned, they must be fulfilled but none should be allowed to use these rights to the extent that is harmful to the collective moral, cultural and economic good of the Community. According to this verse, every owner of wealth should consider seriously before entrusting his wealth to anyone whether that person is capable of using it properly. On the larger scale, the Islamic State should take into its own custody the property of those who are found incapable of using it properly, or of those who may be using it in wrong ways but should arrange for the provision of their necessities of life.

9. That is, "When they are about to attain their puberty, keep an eye upon them and go on testing their intelligence in order to see how far they have become capable of looking after their own affairs."

10. Two conditions of puberty and capability have been laid down for the return of their property to the orphans. As to the application of the first condition, there is consensus among the scholars of law, but in regard to the second condition there is some difference of opinion. Imām Abū Hanīfah is of the opinion that if the orphan lacks capability when he reaches the age of puberty, his guardian may wait for a maximum period of seven years, and then he must return this property to him whether he shows signs of capability or not. But Imam Abu Yusuf, Imām Muḥammad and Imam Shafi'ī are of the opinion that capability is a pre-requisite for the return of his property to the orphan. Probably these latter scholars were inclined to the opinion that the case of such a person should be referred to a Muslim judge, who would himself arrange for the management of the property of the one who has not acquired capability of management.

11. That is, "He should charge for his services only that much as may be considered fair by every unbiased person and that he should charge openly and keep an account of it."

12. This verse contains five legal regulations about inheritance. First, that not only men but the women also have a share in the inheritance. Second, that it must be divided among all heirs, however little or insignificant it is; so much so that even if the deceased has left one yard of cloth and there are ten heirs, it must also be cut into ten parts. However, an heir may buy the shares of others by mutual consent. Third, that the verse also implies that this law applies to all sorts of property, transferable or non-transferable, agricultural or industrial, or of any other type. Fourth, that the right of inheritance becomes valid only when the deceased leaves some property behind him. Fifth, that when the nearest relatives are alive the distant relatives have no right in the inheritance.

وَالْمَسٰكِيْنُ فَارْزُقُوْهُمْ مِّنْهُ وَقُوْلُوْا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوْفًا ۝٨ وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِيْنَ
لَوْ تَرَكُوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعٰفًا خَافُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ ۠ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَلْيَقُوْلُوْا
قَوْلًا سَدِيْدًا ۝٩ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَاْكُلُوْنَ اَمْوَالَ الْيَتٰمٰى ظُلْمًا اِنَّمَا يَاْكُلُوْنَ فِيْ
بُطُوْنِهِمْ نَارًا ۭ وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيْرًا ۝١٠ يُوْصِيْكُمُ اللّٰهُ فِيْٓ اَوْلَادِكُمْ ۤ لِلذَّكَرِ
مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْاُنْثَيَيْنِ ۚ فَاِنْ كُنَّ نِسَاۗءً فَوْقَ اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ ۚ
وَاِنْ كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً فَلَهَا النِّصْفُ ۭ وَلِاَبَوَيْهِ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ
مِمَّا تَرَكَ اِنْ كَانَ لَهٗ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَاِنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَّهٗ وَلَدٌ وَّوَرِثَهٗٓ اَبَوٰهُ فَلِاُمِّهِ
الثُّلُثُ ۚ فَاِنْ كَانَ لَهٗٓ اِخْوَةٌ فَلِاُمِّهِ السُّدُسُ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُّوْصِيْ بِهَآ
اَوْ دَيْنٍ ۭ اٰبَاۗؤُكُمْ وَاَبْنَاۗؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُوْنَ اَيُّهُمْ اَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفْعًا ۭ فَرِيْضَةً مِّنَ
اللّٰهِ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ۝١١ وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ اَزْوَاجُكُمْ اِنْ
لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَّهُنَّ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَاِنْ كَانَ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَلَكُمُ الرُّبُعُ مِمَّا تَرَكْنَ مِنْۢ
بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُّوْصِيْنَ بِهَآ اَوْ دَيْنٍ ۭ وَلَهُنَّ الرُّبُعُ مِمَّا تَرَكْتُمْ اِنْ لَّمْ
يَكُنْ لَّكُمْ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَاِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ الثُّمُنُ مِمَّا تَرَكْتُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ
وَصِيَّةٍ تُوْصُوْنَ بِهَآ اَوْ دَيْنٍ ۭ وَاِنْ كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُّوْرَثُ كَلٰلَةً اَوِ امْرَاَةٌ
وَّلَهٗٓ اَخٌ اَوْ اُخْتٌ فَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ ۚ فَاِنْ كَانُوْٓا اَكْثَرَ مِنْ
ذٰلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَاۗءُ فِي الثُّلُثِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُّوْصٰى بِهَآ اَوْ دَيْنٍ ۙ غَيْرَ
مُضَاۗرٍّ ۚ وَصِيَّةً مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌ حَلِيْمٌ ۝١٢ تِلْكَ حُدُوْدُ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَمَنْ
يُّطِعِ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ
فِيْهَا ۭ وَذٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيْمُ ۝١٣ وَمَنْ يَّعْصِ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ وَيَتَعَدَّ

And if the people of the family, orphans and the poor be present at the division of the inheritance, give them also something out of it and speak to them kind words.[13] 8

Let the people apprehend and be afraid of this: how solicitous they would have been on the eve of their death about the helpless children they would be leaving behind. They should, therefore, fear Allah and say the just and right thing. In fact, those who grab unjustly the property of the orphans, fill their bellies with fire, and most surely they shall be thrown into the burning fire of Hell.[14] 9-10

As regards inheritance, Allah enjoins you concerning your children that: 11

The share of the male shall be twice that of the female.[15] In case the heirs be more than two females, their total share shall be two-thirds[16] of the whole and if there be only one daughter, her share shall be half of the whole. If the deceased has children, each of his parents shall get one-sixth of the whole,[17] but if he be childless and his parents alone are his heirs, the mother shall have one-third of the whole.[18] If the deceased has brothers and sisters also, the mother shall be entitled to one-sixth of the whole.[19] The division of all these shares shall take place only after fulfilling the terms of the will and after the payment of the debt[20] (if any). As regards your parents and your children, you do not know who is more beneficial to you. Allah has apportioned these shares and most surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.[21]

And you will get half of what your wives leave behind, if they be childless; but if they leave children, then your share will be one-fourth of what they have left, after the fulfilment of their will and the payment of their debt (if any). As for them, they will be entitled to one-fourth of the inheritance left by you, if you are childless; but in case you leave behind children, their share will be one-eighth[22] of the whole after the fulfilment of your will and payment of your debt (if any). 12

And if the deceased whether man or woman (whose property is to be divided as inheritance) leaves no children and no parents behind but has one brother or one sister alive each of the two will be entitled to one-sixth of the whole but in case the brothers and the sisters are more than one then the total share of all of them will be one-third[23] of

the whole after the fulfilment of the will and the payment of the debt (if any) provided that it is not injurious[24] (to the heirs). This is the Commandment of Allah and Allah is All-Knowing and Lenient.[25]

13 These are the limits prescribed by Allah: whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, He will admit him into the Gardens underneath which canals flow, wherein he will abide for ever; this is the great success.

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13. Here the heirs of the deceased have been enjoined to be generous towards distant and near relatives and the indigent members of the family and orphans who happen to be present on the occasion of the division of inheritance, though they might have no share in it. They should give them also something and speak gently to them and avoid using harsh and unkind words as the narrow-minded people generally use on such occasions.

14. According to a Tradition this verses were revealed in response to the request of the widow of Ḥadrat Sa'd bin Rubai'. She came to the Holy Prophet with her two daughters and said, "O Messenger of Allah, here are the daughters of Sa'd who has been martyred in the battle of Uhd. Their uncle has taken possession of the whole of his property and has not left a single penny for them. Now who is going to marry them after this?"

15. The first guiding principle about the division of inheritance is that the share of the male shall be double that of the female, and this is very sound and just. As the Muslim law lays the major burden of the economic responsibility of the family on the male and keeps the female almost free from it, justice demands that her share of inheritance should be less than that of the male.

16. The same applies to the case of two daughters as well. It means that if the deceased leaves no son but only daughters, whether they are two or more, they shall be entitled to two-thirds of the whole inheritance and the remaining one-third shall be divided among the other heirs. As a corollary of this, if the deceased leaves only one son, there is a consensus of opinion that he shall be entitled to the whole of the inheritance in the absence of other heirs and if there are other heirs too, he shall receive the whole of the remaining inheritance after the allotment of their shares.

17. Each of the parents of the deceased shall be entitled to one-sixth of the inheritance, if he leaves behind a child or children whether they are only daughters or only sons or both sons and daughters, or only one son or only one daughter. As regards the remaining two-thirds, it shall be divided among the other heirs.

18. The remaining two-thirds shall be given to the father, if there be no other heir; otherwise the father shall share two-thirds with the other heirs.

19. If the deceased has brothers and sisters, the share of the mother has been reduced from one-third to one-sixth. This reduced one-sixth will be added to the father's share, for in that case the father's responsibilities are increased. It should be noted that the brothers and sisters of the deceased are not entitled to any share if the parents are alive.

20. The mention of the fulfilment of the will precedes the payment of the debt, for every deceased person may not owe a debt, but he must make his will. As regards the enforcement of the law, the consensus of opinion of the whole Muslim Community is that the payment of debt must have priority over the fulfilment of the will. That is, the debt, if any, must be paid first and then the terms of the will should be enforced and after this the inheritance should be divided. In E.N. 182 of Al-Baqarah, it has been stated that one has the right to bequeath by will one-third of the whole property. This has been permitted to enable a person to leave for a deserving relative or relatives, who are not entitled to inheritance, a part of the property. For instance, if there is an orphan grandson or a grand-daughter, or the widow of a son or an indigent brother or sister, or a brother's widow, or a nephew, or some other relative, who needs help, he may leave a part of the inheritance for such a one by means of his will. One is even allowed to leave by will a share for any deserving person or for public service. In short, the law regulates the distribution of two-thirds (or a little more) of one's inheritance and gives option for the disposal of the remaining (about one-third) by will to suit the special circumstances of one's own family, (which obviously vary in the case of each individual). At the same time provision has been made to redress any wrong done by a will to the heirs in any way. The members of the family may rectify that wrong by mutual consent or take the case to the Muslim judge for redress. For further explanation, see my book: *Yatim Potay Ki Warāsat.*

21. This is the answer to all those foolish people who do not understand the wisdom of the Divine Law of inheritance, and in their folly propose amendments to it in order to make up for "the deficiency" in the Law.

22. In case the deceased leaves behind children, his wife or wives will be entitled to only one-eighth of the inheritance, and if he dies childless, she or they will be entitled to one-fourth of the whole and this one-fourth or one-eighth will be divided equally among all of them.

23. If there be any other heir, he shall get share out of the remaining 5/6 or 2/3, as the case may be; otherwise the deceased will have the right to make his will about the whole of the remaining 5/6 or 2/3.

[Contd. on p. 316

حُدُوْدَهٗ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَالِدًا فِيْهَا ۪ وَ لَهٗ عَذَابٌ مُّهِيْنٌ ﴿14﴾ وَ الّٰتِيْ يَاْتِيْنَ
الْفَاحِشَةَ مِنْ نِّسَآئِكُمْ فَاسْتَشْهِدُوْا عَلَيْهِنَّ اَرْبَعَةً مِّنْكُمْ ۚ فَاِنْ شَهِدُوْا
فَاَمْسِكُوْهُنَّ فِي الْبُيُوْتِ حَتّٰى يَتَوَفّٰىهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ اَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللّٰهُ لَهُنَّ
سَبِيْلًا ﴿15﴾ وَ الَّذٰنِ يَاْتِيٰنِهَا مِنْكُمْ فَاٰذُوْهُمَا ۚ فَاِنْ تَابَا وَ اَصْلَحَا فَاَعْرِضُوْا
عَنْهُمَا ۚ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿16﴾ اِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللّٰهِ لِلَّذِيْنَ يَعْمَلُوْنَ
السُّوْٓءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوْبُوْنَ مِنْ قَرِيْبٍ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ يَتُوْبُ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ وَ
كَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ﴿17﴾ وَ لَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِيْنَ يَعْمَلُوْنَ السَّيِّاٰتِ ۚ حَتّٰٓى
اِذَا حَضَرَ اَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ اِنِّيْ تُبْتُ الْـٰٔنَ وَ لَا الَّذِيْنَ يَمُوْتُوْنَ وَ
هُمْ كُفَّارٌ ۗ اُولٰٓئِكَ اَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ﴿18﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا يَحِلُّ
لَكُمْ اَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَآءَ كَرْهًا ۗ وَ لَا تَعْضُلُوْهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوْا بِبَعْضِ مَآ اٰتَيْتُمُوْهُنَّ
اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّاْتِيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ ۚ وَ عَاشِرُوْهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ ۚ فَاِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوْهُنَّ
فَعَسٰٓى اَنْ تَكْرَهُوْا شَيْـًٔا وَّ يَجْعَلَ اللّٰهُ فِيْهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيْرًا ﴿19﴾ وَ اِنْ اَرَدْتُّمُ
اسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ زَوْجٍ ۙ وَّ اٰتَيْتُمْ اِحْدٰىهُنَّ قِنْطَارًا فَلَا تَاْخُذُوْا
مِنْهُ شَيْـًٔا ۗ اَتَاْخُذُوْنَهٗ بُهْتَانًا وَّ اِثْمًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿20﴾ وَ كَيْفَ تَاْخُذُوْنَهٗ وَ قَدْ
اَفْضٰى بَعْضُكُمْ اِلٰى بَعْضٍ وَّ اَخَذْنَ مِنْكُمْ مِّيْثَاقًا غَلِيْظًا ﴿21﴾ وَ لَا تَنْكِحُوْا
مَا نَكَحَ اٰبَآؤُكُمْ مِّنَ النِّسَآءِ اِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۗ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَّ مَقْتًا
وَ سَآءَ سَبِيْلًا ﴿22﴾ حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ اُمَّهٰتُكُمْ وَ بَنٰتُكُمْ وَ اَخَوٰتُكُمْ وَ عَمّٰتُكُمْ
وَ خٰلٰتُكُمْ وَ بَنٰتُ الْاَخِ وَ بَنٰتُ الْاُخْتِ وَ اُمَّهٰتُكُمُ الّٰتِيْٓ اَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَ
اَخَوٰتُكُمْ مِّنَ الرَّضَاعَةِ وَ اُمَّهٰتُ نِسَآئِكُمْ وَ رَبَآئِبُكُمُ الّٰتِيْ فِيْ حُجُوْرِكُمْ

And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and transgresses the limits prescribed by Him, Allah will cast him into the Fire wherein he shall abide for ever, and shall have a disgraceful chastisement.[25a] 14

If any of your women be guilty of indecency, call for four witnesses from among yourselves to testify against them. If they give evidence and prove the guilt, then confine them to their houses until death comes to them or Allah opens some other way out for them. And punish the two of you who commit this crime; then if they both repent and reform themselves, leave them alone, for Allah is generous in accepting repentance, and merciful in forgiving sins.[26] 15-16

However, note it well that Allah's acceptance of repentance is for those people only, who commit an evil in ignorance, and then repent of it soon after this. Allah again turns kindly to such people, for Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. But there is no repentance for those people who persist in their evil deeds until the dying hour comes to anyone of them; then he says, "Now I repent." Nor is repentance for them who die as unbelievers; for such people, We have prepared a painful torment.[27] 17-18

O Believers, it is not lawful for you to become the heirs of widows by force;[28] nor is it lawful that you should treat your wives harshly in order to deprive them of a part of the dowry you have given them. However (you have the right to treat them harshly), if they are guilty of adultery.[29] You should live with them in an honourable manner, even if you dislike them; it is possible that Allah may bring much good to you through that very thing you dislike.[30] And if you make up your mind to marry another wife in place of the one you already have, do not take back anything out of what you have given her, even though it may have been a heap of wealth. Will you take it back by slander and gross injustice? And how is it proper for you to take it, when both of you have enjoyed conjugal happiness and she received from you a solemn pledge of union?[31] 19-21

And do not marry at all those women whom your father had married though what has happened in the past is excepted.[32] This is an indecent and abominable thing and an evil practice.[33] 22

Contd. from p. 313]

All the commentators are agreed that in this verse brothers and sisters refer to half-brothers and half-sisters from the side of the mother alone. The rule of inheritance about real brothers and real sisters and half-brothers and half-sisters from the side of the father is given at the end of the Sūrah.

24. The will shall be considered as injurious if it affects adversely the rights of the lawful heirs and the debt will be injurious if the testator acknowledges a debt which he has not actually taken or plays some trick to deprive the rightful heirs of their due shares. Such a thing has been declared as one of the most heinous sins according to a Tradition. Another Tradition of the Holy Prophet says, "There may be a person, who, throughout his whole life, does deeds that deserve Paradise, but who on the eve of his death makes an injurious will and thus in the end he does an act that deserves Hell." Though such an injury is a heinous sin in any case, the warning has specially been given about it in connection with a person who has neither children nor parents to inherit his property. This is because such a one is more prone to squander his property in order to deprive comparatively distant relatives.

25. The attribute of Allah that He is All-Knowing, has been mentioned here for two reasons. First, it is to warn the people that none can escape the consequences of a breach of His Law, for, He has knowledge of everything. Second, it is to convince people that the shares of inheritance appointed by Allah are absolutely right, for Allah knows better than they in what lies their good. The other attribute that He is Lenient has been mentioned to show that the Laws of Allah are not harsh but are so lenient that they do not put the people to hardship.

25*a*. This stern warning has been given to save people from the eternal torture of Hell, which they will suffer if they change the law of inheritance or break other legal limits prescribed by Allah in His Book. It is a pity that in spite of this stern warning the Muslims changed and broke the Law of Allah with the same impudence as shown by the Jews. The transgressions against this law of inheritance are an open rebellion against Allah. They deprive women of their share of inheritance; they discard the Law of Allah and adopt the Law of primo-geniture or of joint family system instead: whenever it suits their whims and interests they make the share of the male and the female equal in order to rectify the Law of Allah. The latest rebellion against the Law is that some Muslim States have followed the West and imposed "Death Duties" which implies that the State is also an heir whom Allah had forgotten to mention. As a matter of fact, the state is entitled to an inheritance only if the deceased leaves behind an unclaimed property or himself allots a portion of it to the state by his will.

26. In both these verses (15-16), punishment for fornication was prescribed for the first time in Islam. According to verse 15, the guilty women were to be kept in confinement till further order, and according to verse 16 both the male and the female guilty of fornication were to be punished, that is rebuked, disgraced, beaten, etc. Afterwards this punishment was altered by verse 2 of Sūrah An-Nūr (XXIV). Now both the male and the female are to be scourged with one hundred stripes each.

This gradual enforcement of the criminal law was based on sound practical wisdom. At that time the Arabs were not accustomed to live under a settled government with a regular system of law and judiciary. Therefore it might have unwise and too much for them, if the Islamic State had imposed on them its complete system of criminal laws all at once. That is why at first the sort of punishment contained in these two verses was enforced and then gradually stricter punishments were prescribed for fornication, theft, slander, etc., and finally that complete system of law was evolved which was in force during the time of the Holy Prophet and his rightly guided successors.

The seeming difference in these two verses has misled commentator Suddī to the conclusion that verse 15 prescribed the punishment for married women and verse 16 for unmarried men and women. Obviously, this flimsy commentary is not supported by any sound argument. Likewise, the commentary of Abū Muslim Isfahānī that verse 15 is about the un-natural crime between two females and verse 16 about the un-natural crime between two males is also wrong. The Qur'ān is concerned only with the fundamental principles of law and morality; therefore it only discusses those problems which are confronted in normal life and does not concern itself with the ones that are met with under abnormal circumstances. These latter problems, as they arise, are left for the people to decide according to their insight. That is why, when after the death of the Holy Prophet the case of un-natural crime between two males was brought before the Companions, none of them turned to these verses for its decision.

27. The word *taubah* means 'to turn back' and 'to turn to'. When a person feels sorry for his sin and turns back from it, he may be likened to a runaway slave who comes back to his master. This is his *taubah*. When the master accepts his repentance, he turns to him kindly and forgives him. In Arabic this is his *taubah* to his servant. In this verse Allah has stated these two aspects of *taubah*. He says, "I turn only to those servants of Mine, who, if they commit some un-intentional sin through ignorance, turn to Me for forgiveness as soon as they realize their folly. For such repentance, the door of My forgiveness is ever open. It is, however, not so for those who persist in sin throughout their lives without the least fear of Allah

(Contd. on p. 320

مِّنْ نِّسَآئِكُمُ الّٰتِیْ دَخَلْتُمْ بِهِنَّ ۫ فَاِنْ لَّمْ تَكُوْنُوْا دَخَلْتُمْ بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَیْكُمْ ۫ وَحَلَآئِلُ اَبْنَآئِكُمُ الَّذِیْنَ مِنْ اَصْلَابِكُمْ ۙ وَاَنْ تَجْمَعُوْا بَیْنَ
الْاُخْتَیْنِ اِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِیْمًا ﴿۲۳﴾

الجزء ۵ وَّالْمُحْصَنٰتُ مِنَ النِّسَآءِ اِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ اَیْمَانُكُمْ ۚ كِتٰبَ اللّٰهِ عَلَیْكُمْ ۚ

وَاُحِلَّ لَكُمْ مَّا وَرَآءَ ذٰلِكُمْ اَنْ تَبْتَغُوْا بِاَمْوَالِكُمْ مُّحْصِنِیْنَ غَیْرَ مُسٰفِحِیْنَ ؕ فَمَا
اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهٖ مِنْهُنَّ فَاٰتُوْهُنَّ اُجُوْرَهُنَّ فَرِیْضَةً ؕ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَیْكُمْ فِیْمَا
تَرٰضَیْتُمْ بِهٖ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ الْفَرِیْضَةِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلِیْمًا حَكِیْمًا ﴿۲۴﴾ وَمَنْ لَّمْ
یَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا اَنْ یَّنْكِحَ الْمُحْصَنٰتِ الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ فَمِنْ مَّا مَلَكَتْ اَیْمَانُكُمْ
مِّنْ فَتَیٰتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ بِاِیْمَانِكُمْ ؕ بَعْضُكُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْضٍ ۚ فَانْكِحُوْهُنَّ
بِاِذْنِ اَهْلِهِنَّ وَاٰتُوْهُنَّ اُجُوْرَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ مُحْصَنٰتٍ غَیْرَ مُسٰفِحٰتٍ وَّ
لَا مُتَّخِذٰتِ اَخْدَانٍ ۚ فَاِذَاۤ اُحْصِنَّ فَاِنْ اَتَیْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ فَعَلَیْهِنَّ نِصْفُ
مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنٰتِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ؕ ذٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِیَ الْعَنَتَ مِنْكُمْ ؕ وَاَنْ
تَصْبِرُوْا خَیْرٌ لَّكُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِیْمٌ ﴿۲۵﴾ یُرِیْدُ اللّٰهُ لِیُبَیِّنَ لَكُمْ وَیَهْدِیَكُمْ
سُنَنَ الَّذِیْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَیَتُوْبَ عَلَیْكُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِیْمٌ حَكِیْمٌ ﴿۲۶﴾ وَاللّٰهُ
یُرِیْدُ اَنْ یَّتُوْبَ عَلَیْكُمْ ۟ وَیُرِیْدُ الَّذِیْنَ یَتَّبِعُوْنَ الشَّهَوٰتِ اَنْ تَمِیْلُوْا
مَیْلًا عَظِیْمًا ﴿۲۷﴾ یُرِیْدُ اللّٰهُ اَنْ یُّخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ ۚ وَخُلِقَ الْاِنْسَانُ ضَعِیْفًا ﴿۲۸﴾
یٰۤاَیُّهَا الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَاْكُلُوْۤا اَمْوَالَكُمْ بَیْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ اِلَّاۤ اَنْ تَكُوْنَ
تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْكُمْ ۟ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوْۤا اَنْفُسَكُمْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِیْمًا ﴿۲۹﴾
وَمَنْ یَّفْعَلْ ذٰلِكَ عُدْوَانًا وَّظُلْمًا فَسَوْفَ نُصْلِیْهِ نَارًا ؕ وَكَانَ ذٰلِكَ

Forbidden to you are your mothers,[34] daughters,[35] sisters,[36] paternal aunts, maternal aunts, brother's daughters, sister's daughters,[37] your foster mothers who have given a suckle to you, your foster sisters,[38] who have taken suckle with you, the mothers of your wives,[39] the daughters of your wives whom you have brought up,[40] the daughters of those wives with whom you have had conjugal relations, but not of those wives with whom you have had no conjugal relations, and it is not sinful for you to marry their daughters (after having divorced them); — and also forbidden to you are the wives of your sons who are from your loins,[41] and it is unlawful for you to keep two real sisters as wives at one and the same time,[42] though what happened in the past is excepted, for Allah is indeed Forgiving, Merciful.[43] And forbidden to you are the wedded wives of other people except those who have fallen in your hands (as prisoners of war[44]): this is the Law of Allah that has been prescribed for you. With the exception of the above, it has been made lawful for you to seek in marriage with your wealth any other women provided that you keep them in wedlock and not in licentiousness. Then you should pay them their dowries as an obligation for the enjoyment of conjugal relations with them. However, there is no harm if a compromise is made in the dower by mutual consent after an agreement about it; Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. 23-24

Whoever cannot afford to marry free Muslim women, should marry one of the Muslim slave-girls in your possession; Allah has full knowledge of your Faith. You all belong to one and the same community;[45] therefore, you may marry them with the permission of their guardians and give them their fair dowries so that they may live a decent life in wedlock and not in licentiousness nor may have secret illicit relations. Then if they are guilty of indecency, after they have been fortified by wedlock, they shall be given half the punishment prescribed for free women.[46] This concession[47] has been made for those of you who might apprehend a moral lapse without marriage, but it is better for you to practise self-restraint, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. 24-25

Allah desires to make clear to you and guide you to the ways that were followed by the righteous people before you, and to turn to you mercifully; for He is All-Knowing, All-Wise.[48] Yes, Allah desires 26-28

to turn to you mercifully, but those who follow their lusts, want that you should swerve far away from the right path.[49] Allah wills to make your restrictions light, for Man has been created weak by nature.

29-30 O Believers, do not devour one another's property by unlawful ways; (instead of this) do business with mutual consent.[50] And do not kill yourselves;[51] believe it that Allah is Compassionate to you.[52] We shall throw into the Fire the one who commits such acts of aggression and injustice; and this is very easy for Allah.

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and offer repentance only when death confronts them". The Holy Prophet says that Allah accepts the repentance of a person only up to the time, when there appears no sign of death. It is obvious that after the time of test has expired, no chance is left for him to turn back from sin. Likewise, if a person is dying as a disbeliever and seeing with his own eyes the other world, contrary to his expectations, the question of his repentance does not arise at all.

28. This means that the widow of the deceased should not be regarded as a part of his inheritance. After the death of the husband, his widow is quite free to live wherever she likes and to marry whomever she chooses after the expiry of her term.

29. That is, "You may hurt them for immoral conduct but not for grabbing their wealth."

30. If the wife is not beautiful or has some other defect that might not be to the husband's liking, it is not right that he should make up his mind to get rid of her at once without any further consideration. He should behave coolly and patiently. She may have some other redeeming qualities that may be more conducive to a happy married life than beautiful looks. It is just possible that the discovery of those qualities might change his repulsion at first sight into attraction. In the same way, sometimes it so happens that in the beginning of married life, the husband takes a dislike to something in the wife and feels a repulsion towards her but if he is patient with her and lets her show her better side fully, he himself realizes that her good qualities more than compensate for her shortcomings. Therefore it is not right for the husband to cut off his relations with his wife without a good deal of thinking. Divorce is the very last thing to which one may resort as a necessary social surgery and that, too, only when it becomes absolutely inevitable. The Holy Prophet says that of all the lawful things, divorce is the most reprehensible thing in the sight of Allah. In another Tradition, he admonishes,

"Enter into marriage and divorce not, for Allah does not approve of such men and women as divorce and marry for mere sexual enjoyment."

31. "Solemn pledge" is the marriage bond on the guarantee of which a woman gives herself up to a man. Therefore, if the man breaks that pledge of his own accord, he has no right to get back what he gave her as dower at the time of making that pledge. (Please see E.N. 251, Al-Baqarah, also).

32. While forbidding the wrong ways of 'ignorance', the Holy Qur'ān usually ends the instruction with such words as: "though what has happened in the past is excepted." It has two meanings in view. First, that no action will be taken in regard to those wrong things that one did in ignorance, provided that one mended one's ways and gave them up after the receipt of a particular Commandment. Second, that those words meant to give reassurance that the new instructions had no retrospective effect. For instance, if a person had married his step-mother before it was declared to be unlawful, according to these words, the offspring of all such previous marriages did not automatically become illegitimate by this newly declared prohibition so as to deprive them of their share of inheritance. Likewise if some form of trade had been made unlawful, it did not mean that all the previous transactions in that form had become null and void, and that one would have to return all the wealth earned in that way or that it had become completely unlawful.

33. According to the Islamic Law, it is a criminal offence and is within the jurisdiction of the police. Some Traditions related in Abū-Da'ūd, Nasā'ī and Musnad Aḥmad are to the effect that the Holy Prophet confiscated their properties and sentenced to death those who married their step-mothers. According to another Tradition, related by Ibn Mājah from Ibn 'Abbās, the Holy Prophet enunciated this fundamental law: "Anyone who commits fornication with any of the forbidden relations should be put to death." The experts on Muslim Law, however, differ in regard to this matter. While Imām Aḥmad is of the opinion that such a criminal should be put to death and his property confiscated, Imam Abu Ḥanīfah, Imām Mālik and Imām Shafi'ī are of the opinion that if a person commits fornication with anyone of the prohibited relations, he should be punished for the offence of fornication and if he marries such a one, he should be given an exemplary punishment for this heinous sin.

34. This prohibition applies both to the real mother and to the step-mother and both are unlawful. It also applies to the mother of the father and to the mother of the mother.

Experts have differed as to whether the woman with whom the father has had illicit relations is also unlawful for the son or not. Some of the earlier jurists

do not consider her unlawful, but some others not only consider her unlawful for the son but also the woman whom the father has touched lustfully with the hand. There has also been a difference of opinion as to whether the woman with whom the son has had an illicit relation is unlawful for the father and whether the man with whom the mother or the daughter has had illicit relation becomes unlawful for both the mother and the daughter. There have been lengthy controversies concerning the legal niceties of this matter, but a little thinking will show that the existence of a wife who is also coveted by the husband's father or his son, or whose mother or daughter is also coveted by the husband himself, cannot bode well for a righteous society. Divine Law in this matter does not tolerate the legal hair splitting on the basis of which fine distinctions are made between marriage and after marriage, touching with the hand and casting of looks, etc. The simple thing is that in family life existence of sexual relations of the father and the son with one and the same woman, or of the mother and the daughter with one and the same man, is bound to corrupt the family, and the Divine Law cannot tolerate it. This is supported by the following two Traditions of the Holy Prophet:

(1) "The mother and the daughter of the woman become unlawful for the man who cast a look at her sexual organs."

(2) "God does not like even to look at a man who casts a gaze at the sexual organs of the mother and of her daughter."

35. The prohibition about daughter also applies to the daughter of the son and the daughter of the daughter. There is, however, a difference of opinion in regard to a girl born of an illicit relationship. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, Imām Mālik and Imām Aḥmad-bin-Ḥanbal (may Allah bless them all) are of the opinion that she too is unlawful like the lawful daughter, but Imām Shafi'ī does not consider an illegitimate daughter unlawful. But the very idea is repugnant that one should marry a girl about whom one has the knowledge that she is of one's own seed.

36. This applies to the real sister as well as to the foster sisters from the father's and the mother's side.

37. All these relations are prohibited, irrespective of whether they are real or step from the father's side or from the mother's side. The sister of the father or mother, whether real or step, is unlawful for the son. Similarly the daughters of the brothers and sisters whether they are real or step are unlawful for a person like his own real daughter.

38. The consensus of opinion is that the woman who suckled a boy or a girl should be treated as the real mother and her husband as the real father with regard to this prohibition. All those relations that have been made unlawful in respect of the real mother and real father are also prohibited in respect of the foster

mother who has suckled and in respect of her husband. This is based on a Tradition of the Holy Prophet which is to this effect: "Suckling makes unlawful what blood makes unlawful." There is, however, a difference of opinion as to the minimum quantity of milk that is suckled. According to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and Imam Mālik, if the child suckles milk equal to that minimum quantity that breaks the fast, the woman shall be treated as its real mother for marriage relations. But Imām Ahmad is of the opinion that the prohibition shall take place if the child suckles the woman at least three times and accordng to Imam Shāfi'ī at least five times. There is also a difference of opinion as to the age of the child at the time of suckling that brings prohibition. Below are given the opinions of the jurists:

(1) Hadrat Umm Salamah, Ibu 'Abbas, Zuhri, Ḥasan Basri, Qatadah, 'Ikrimah, and Auza'i are of the opinion that if the child is suckled during the period when it has not yet been weaned and it lives only on suckling, the prohibition shall be effective; but if it is suckled after it has been weaned, it will not apply; for this is like drinking water. There is also a saying of Ḥadrat 'Ali to the same effect.

(2) Hadrat 'Umar, Ibn Mas'ud, Abū Hurairah and Ibn 'Umar (Allah be pleased with them) are of the opinion that the prohibition will be effective if the child is suckled at any time up to the age of two. Imām Shaāfi'i, Imām Ahmad, Imām Abū Yūsuf, Imām Muḥammad and Sufyān Thauri from among the jurists also agree to this. There is also a saying of Imam Abu Hanifah to the same effect. Imam Malik also agrees to this, but he says that the prohibition shall apply even if a month or two exceeds the time limit of two years.

(3) According to a well-known saying of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and Imām Zufar, the prohibition shall apply if the child is suckled during the suckling period, which extends 'up to the age of two years and a half'

(4) Ḥadrat 'Ā'ishah is of the opinion that the prohibition shall apply, if one is suckled at any time whatsoever, irrespective of age. An authentic saying of Ḥadrat 'Ali also supports the same and 'Urwah bin Zubair, 'Atā', Laith bin Sa'd and Ibn Hazm from among the jurists have adopted the same opinion.

39. There is a difference of opinion as to whether the mere event of *nikāh* (marriage ceremony) with a woman makes her mother unlawful or not. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, Aḥmad and Shafi'ī are of the opinion that this alone makes her mother unlawful but Ḥadrat 'Ali is of the opinion that unless one has had any conjugal relation with her, her mother shall not become unlawful for him.

40. The wife's daughter is unlawful in any case, whether she has been brought up in the house of the step-father or not. Allah has used these words only to show the great delicacy of the relation. There is almost a consensus of opinion

among the jurists that the step-daughter is unlawful in any case whether one has brought her up or not.

41. The significance of "who are from your loins" is that the widows or the divorced wives of those whom one has adopted as sons are not unlawful. The prohibition applies only to the wives of the sons who are of one's own seed. Likewise, the wives of the grandsons are also unlawful.

42. Likewise it is unlawful to keep the aunt and her real niece as wives at one and the same time. The principle is that no two women who would have been unlawful for each other if one of them had been a man should be kept as wives at one and the same time.

43. That is, "No action will be taken for the transgression committed during the days of 'ignorance', by keeping two sisters as wives at one and the same time." (Please also see E.N. 32 above). However, one shall have to divorce one of the two sisters thus married during the time of un-belief after one has become a Muslim.

44. That is, those women who become prisoners of war, while their unbelieving husbands are left behind in the War Zone, are not unlawful because their marriage ties are broken by the fact that they have come from the War Zone into the Islamic Zone. It is lawful to marry such women, and it is also lawful for those, in whose possession they are, to have sexual relations with them. There is, however, a difference of opinion as to whether such a woman is lawful, if her husband is also taken a prisoner along with her. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and those of his way of thinking are of the opinion that the marriage tie of such a pair would remain intact but Imam Malik and Shāfi'i, are of the opinion that it would also break.

As there exist many misunderstandings in the minds of the people concerning the slave-girls taken as prisoners of war, the following should be carefully studied:

(1) It is not lawful for a soldier to have conjugal relations with a prisoner of war as soon as she falls into his hands. The Islamic Law requires that all such women should be handed over to the government, which has the right to set them free or to ransom them, or to exchange them with the Muslim prisoners in the hands of the enemy, or distribute them among the soldiers. A soldier can cohabit only with that woman who has been formally given to him by the government.

(2) Even then, he shall have to wait for one monthly course before he can cohabit with her in order to ensure whether she is pregnant or not; otherwise it shall be unlawful to cohabit with her before delivery.

(3) It does not matter whether the female prisoner of war belongs to the people of the Book or not. Whatever her religion, she becomes lawful for the man to whom she is formally given.

(4) None but the one to whom the slave-girl is given has the right to "touch her." The offspring of such a woman from his seed shall be his lawful children and shall have the same legal rights as are given by the Divine Law to the children from one's loins. After the birth of a child she cannot be sold as a slave-girl and shall automatically become free after her master's death.

(5) If the master marries his slave-girl with another man, he forfeits his conjugal rights over her, but retains other rights such as service from her.

(6) The maximum limit of four has not been prescribed for slave-girls as in the case of wives for the simple reason that the number of female prisoners of war is unpredictable. The lack of limit does by no means provide a license for the well-to-do people to buy any number of slave-girls for licentious purposes.

(7) The proprietary rights over a slave, male or female, as given to a person by the government are transferable like all other legal proprietary rights.

(8) The handing over of the proprietary rights over a slave-girl to a man formally by the government makes her as much lawful for him as the giving of the hand of a free woman to a man by her parents or guardian through *nikāh* (marriage ceremony). Therefore, there is no reason why a man who does not hold marriage in detestation should hold sexual intercourse with a slave-girl in detestation.

(9) When once the government hands over the female prisoner of war to someone, it has no right whatever to take her back from him, just as the parent or guardian has no right to take back a woman after she is handed over to a man through *nikāh*.

(10) It should also be noted well that if a military commander temporarily distributes female prisoners of war among the soldiers for sexual purposes, or permits them to have sexual relations for the time being, such an act shall be unlawful and there is absolutely no difference between this and fornication, and fornication is a crime according to the Islamic code. (For detailed discussion please refer to my books, *Tafhīmāt II* and *Rasā'il-o-Masā'il I*).

45. That is, "The social differences among the people are merely relative; otherwise all Muslims are equal. As a matter of fact, the thing that distinguishes one Muslim from another is the quality of his Faith, and that is not the monopoly of the higher ranks of society. It is just possible that a Muslim slave-girl is higher in rank in regard to belief and morality than a free woman of a high family.

46. It should be kept in view that in this section (vv. 24-25) the Arabic word *muḥṣanāt* has been used in two different senses: (1) "wedded wives", enjoying the protection of their husbands; and (2) "free Muslim women" enjoying the protection of their families, even though they might not be married. This is important, because the lack of differentiation between these two meanings has given rise to a superficial complication. The Khārijites and those others who do not believe in the stoning of an adulterous woman have misconstrued this verse (25) to prove their own point of view. They argue that in this verse, the punishment prescribed for an adulterous married slave-girl is half of the punishment prescribed for a free "married" Muslim woman. If the punishment for an adulterous free married woman had been stoning to death, there could be no half of this punishment for a guilty slave-girl. Hence, this verse is, according to them, a conclusive proof that the punishment of stoning does not exist in Islam.

The fallacy of the above argument becomes obvious, if one uses common sense in the application of the appropriate meaning of *muḥṣanat*. In the case of the guilty slave-girl, it has been used in the sense of "married woman", enjoying the protection of the husband, as is plain from the subsequent clause; "after they have been fortified in wedlock". But in the case of the guilty Muslim woman, half of whose punishment is to be given, it means "free Muslim woman" enjoying the protection of her family, and does not mean a "free married Muslim woman", as has been misconstrued by the opponents of the punishment of stoning.

As regards the lighter punishment for an adulterous slave-girl than for a free Muslim woman, it is based on the fact that the latter enjoys double protection as compared with the former — the protection of the family (even though she be unmarried) and the protection of the husband, which reinforces the protection of the family she already enjoys. In contrast to a free woman, a slave-girl does not enjoy any protection at all, if she is unmarried, and even after marriage her position does not become equal to that of an un-married free Muslim woman, for the latter enjoys the protection of her status, her family, her clan, etc. On the other hand, a slave-girl still remains, to some extent, under the bondage of slavery and has no protection of the family, clan, etc. Therefore, her punishment should be half of an un-married free woman and *not half of a free married woman.*

Furthermore this also shows that the punishment of one hundred stripes as prescribed in An-Nūr, XXIV : 2, is for an un-married free Muslim woman guilty of fornication half of which has been prescribed here for a slave married girl. As for an adulterous married free woman she deserves capital punishment for this heinous crime because she enjoys the double protection of the family and of the husband, and that punishment is "stoning her to death." Though the Qur'ān does not explicitly mention the punishment of stoning to death, it does indicate it in a

subtle manner, which the Holy Prophet understood and enforced. And who else could understand the Qur'ān better?

47. The "concession" is to marry one of the slave-girls with the consent of her master if one cannot afford to marry a free Muslim woman.

48. The "way" refer to all those instructions that have been given from the beginning of the Sūrah to this point, and to those already given in Al-Baqarah about cultural and social problems. Allah is telling the believers that it is His bounty that He is taking them out of the ways of "ignorance" and guiding them to the moral ways of good people, that have always been followed by the Prophets of every age and their pious followers.

49. Those who intended to turn the believers back from the Right Way to the ways of error were the hypocrites, the ignorant people of the old ways, and the Jews living in the suburbs of Madinah. The first two groups strongly disliked the changes that were being made to reform their centuries old prejudices, rites and customs. They were opposed to : *(a)* the share of the daughters in inheritance, *(b)* the freedom of the widow from the restrictions placed on her by her husband's people, and to marry the husband of her liking after the expiry of the term, *(c)* the prohibition of marriage with step-mother, and with two real sisters simultaneously. They were averse to the reform of the institution of adoption which abolished the share of the adopted sons in inheritance and removed the restriction on the marriage of their divorced wives or their widows with their adopted fathers. These and such other reforms so upset the worshippers of the old traditions and customs that they cried themselves hoarse with protests against them. The mischief-mongers criticized bitterly the Holy Prophet and incited the people against his person and his invitation. For instance, if there was a person who was born as a result of a marriage which had become unlawful by the application of the reformed laws, they would incite him by saying that he had been declared illegitimate by the Holy Prophet. Thus the foolish people were opposing the work of reform which was being carried out under Divine Guidance.

Then there were the Jews who were engaged in vicious propaganda against this reformative work which went against their self-made laws. They demanded that the Qur'ān should declare these laws to be the Divine Laws, even though they had changed their very character and substance, by making fine and unnecessary distinctions, by introducing into it their own superstitious customs as laws, by imposing their own restrictions and hard conditions and making many lawful things unlawful. They, therefore, could not appreciate the simple rules and regulations that were being presented by the Qur'ān. That is why their rabbis,

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عَلَى اللّٰهِ يَسِيْرًا ﴿30﴾ اِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوْا كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّاٰتِكُمْ
وَنُدْخِلْكُمْ مُّدْخَلًا كَرِيْمًا ﴿31﴾ وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللّٰهُ بِهٖ بَعْضَكُمْ
عَلٰى بَعْضٍ ؕ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيْبٌ مِّمَّا اكْتَسَبُوْا ؕ وَلِلنِّسَآءِ نَصِيْبٌ مِّمَّا اكْتَسَبْنَ ؕ
وَسْـَٔلُوا اللّٰهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمًا ﴿32﴾ وَلِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا
مَوَالِيَ مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدٰنِ وَالْاَقْرَبُوْنَ ؕ وَالَّذِيْنَ عَقَدَتْ اَيْمَانُكُمْ فَاٰتُوْهُمْ
نَصِيْبَهُمْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيْدًا ﴿33﴾ اَلرِّجَالُ قَوّٰمُوْنَ عَلَى
النِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللّٰهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ وَّبِمَآ اَنْفَقُوْا مِنْ اَمْوَالِهِمْ ؕ
فَالصّٰلِحٰتُ قٰنِتٰتٌ حٰفِظٰتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللّٰهُ ؕ وَالّٰتِيْ تَخَافُوْنَ نُشُوْزَهُنَّ
فَعِظُوْهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوْهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوْهُنَّ ۚ فَاِنْ اَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا
تَبْغُوْا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيْلًا ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلِيًّا كَبِيْرًا ﴿34﴾ وَاِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ
بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوْا حَكَمًا مِّنْ اَهْلِهٖ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ اَهْلِهَا ۚ اِنْ يُّرِيْدَآ اِصْلَاحًا
يُّوَفِّقِ اللّٰهُ بَيْنَهُمَا ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلِيْمًا خَبِيْرًا ﴿35﴾ وَاعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ وَلَا
تُشْرِكُوْا بِهٖ شَيْئًا وَّبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ اِحْسَانًا وَّبِذِي الْقُرْبٰى وَالْيَتٰمٰى وَالْمَسٰكِيْنِ
وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبٰى وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنْۢبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيْلِ ۙ
وَمَا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُكُمْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُوْرًا ﴿36﴾ اَلَّذِيْنَ
يَبْخَلُوْنَ وَيَاْمُرُوْنَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ وَيَكْتُمُوْنَ مَآ اٰتٰىهُمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ ؕ
وَاَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ عَذَابًا مُّهِيْنًا ﴿37﴾ وَالَّذِيْنَ يُنْفِقُوْنَ اَمْوَالَهُمْ رِئَآءَ
النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّكُنِ الشَّيْطٰنُ
لَهٗ قَرِيْنًا فَسَآءَ قَرِيْنًا ﴿38﴾ وَمَاذَا عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْ اٰمَنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَ

If you abstain from the heinous sins from which you are being forbidden, We will remit your trivial offences[53] and admit you to a place of honour. 31

And do not covet what Allah has given some of you more than others: the men shall have their due share according to what they have earned and the women shall have their share according to what they have earned. So pray to Allah for His bounty; most surely Allah has perfect knowledge of everything.[54] 32

We have appointed rightful heirs to the inheritance which is left by parents and relatives. As for those with whom you have made a pledge, do give them their share: most surely Allah is watching over everything.[55] 33

Men are the managers[56] of the affairs of women because Allah has made the one superior to the other[57] and because men spend of their wealth on women. Virtuous women are, therefore, obedient; they guard their rights carefully in their absence[58] under the care and watch of Allah. As for those women whose defiance you have cause to fear, admonish them and keep them apart from your beds and beat them.[59] Then, if they submit to you, do not look for excuses to punish them: note it well that there is Allah above you, Who is Supreme and Great. And if you fear a breach between spouses, appoint one arbiter from the relatives of the husband and one from the relatives of the wife. If the two[60] sides sincerely desire to set things right, Allah will create a way of reconciliation between them, for surely Allah knows everything and is aware of everything.[61] 34-35

And all of you should serve God and associate none with Him; and show kindness and affection to your parents, and be kind to near relatives, and to orphans, and to the needy; and be considerate to your neighbours — kinsmen and strangers and to the companions at your side[62] and to the wayfarer and to the slaves in your possession. Believe it that Allah does not like such persons as are self-conceited and are niggardly and bid others to be niggardly, and conceal the bounty of Allah that He has bestowed upon them;[63] We have prepared a disgraceful chastisement for such ungrateful wretches. And Allah does not like those who expend their wealth to be seen of people, for they do not believe sincerely in Allah and the Last Day. The fact is that 36-38

whoever has Satan for a comrade, has a very evil company.

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scribes and common people did not accept the Qur'ān as the Book of Allah. They were so upset by its reformative laws that they made each and every Commandment of the Qur'ān the target of their criticism and opposed and rejected it.

For instance, the Jews considered the women utterly unclean during the menses. They would not take the meals cooked by them nor drink water touched by their hands nor even sit on the same carpet with them. In short, the women were practically made untouchables in their homes. As the Anṣar had also adopted the same customs when the Holy Prophet migrated to Madīnah, they asked him about the monthly course. In answer to this question, v. 222 of Al-Baqarah was sent down; accordingly the Holy Prophet instructed that during the monthly course only cohabitation was prohibited and all other relations with the women would remain the same as before. At this, the Jews raised a great hue and cry, saying, "This man is bent upon opposing us in everything and making lawful what is unlawful with us and unlawful what is lawful with us."

50. "Unlawful ways" include all the ways that are against the Islamic law and principles and are false and immoral.

"Business" comprises all those transactions that are carried out for profit, benefit, etc., as in trade, commerce, industry, etc., by which one satisfies the needs of another who pays for the service rendered.

"Mutual consent" implies that those transactions should be carried out by mutual agreement and not by coercion or fraud. For instance, although apparently there is a mutual agreement in interest and bribery, yet it is obvious that the needy party is compelled by circumstances to agree to such transactions. In gambling also each participant is deluded by the false hope of "winning". Neither would agree to gamble if he knew that he would lose. The same is true of every case of transaction which involves fraud. The defrauded one agrees under the misunderstanding that there is no fraud in it. If he knew that he was being deceived, he would never agree to this.

51. "Do not kill yourselves" may be complementary to the preceding sentence or may, in itself, be an independent sentence. In the first case, it would mean that the one who devours unlawfully the property of others; does in fact lead himself to his own destruction, for such an evil deed ruins the social order to such an extent that ultimately he himself cannot escape its evil consequences, and in the Hereafter most surely he incurs severe punishment.

In the second case, it would mean, "Do not kill each other", or "Do not commit suicide". Allah has used such comprehensive words that in the context they occur, they imply all the three senses, and all these are correct.

52. That is, "Allah is your well-wisher and wishes you well: it is only His compassion that He forbids you such deeds as cause your ruin."

53. That is, "We are not narrow-minded and prejudiced that We should take Our servants to task for each and every trivial offence. But if you commit wicked and heinous sins, then you shall have to render an account of the trivial offences as well."

Here it will be worthwhile to understand the basic differences between the "heinous sins" and the "trivial offences". As far as I have understood from a critical study of the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* (and the correct and right knowledge is only with Allah), I have come to the conclusion that the following three things make a sin heinous:

(1) The violation of the rights of Allah, or of parents, or of other human beings, or one's own rights. The wickedness of the sin increases in proportion to the sanctity of the right that is violated. That is why the Qur'ān calls a sin *Zulm* (iniquity) and declares *shirk* to be a gross inlquity.

(2) A sin becomes heinous, if it is committed to defy the Divine Laws. This is because the offender deliberately, boldly and shamelessly discards the Commandements and Prohibitions of Allah and intentionally does that which He prohibits, merely for the sake of disobedience, and impudently does not do that which He has commanded. The gravity of this sin increases in proportion to the impudence that is shown towards Allah in disobeying and discarding His Law. That is why the Qur'ān calls sin *fisq* (disobedience) and *ma'ṣiyat* (arrogance).

(3) The violation of those relations and the cutting off of those connections on the unification and integrity of which depends the peace of human life, makes a sin heinous whether these relations are between man and Allah or between man and man. The gravity of the sin of violation or the cutting off of a connection increases in proportion to the importance of the relation, and to the security contained in it. For instance, fornication in its different forms is in itself a heinous sin, for it corrupts human society. But in some forms it becomes far more heinous than in others. The sin of adultery committed by a married man is far more heinous than that committed by an unmarried man. Likewise, adultery with a married woman is a far greater sin than fornication with an unmarried woman. In the same way, sexual intercourse with the womenfolk of a neighbour is far more heinous than with others and incest with mother, sister or daughter become the most heinous sin conceivable

because of the security and sanctity the relation provides. For the same reason the sin committed in the mosque is far more wicked than elsewhere. In the above instances, the difference in the gravity of the same sin is due to the difference in the nature of the sanctity of the relations and the security contained in them. This is why, sin is also called *fujur* (violation of relations).

54. In this verse Allah has given a very important moral instruction, which, if observed, would bring great peace in the troubled social life of today. Allah has taught people not to be covetous for and be envious of the possessions of others, for He has not, in His wisdom, created all men alike. But for this disparity life would have become dull.

As Allah has perfect knowledge of everything, He has created one beautiful and another ugly. He has given to one a melodious voice and to another a harsh voice. He has made one of strong physique and another of weak constitution. He has endowed one with some good qualities of mind and body and another with other qualities. He has created one in straitened and another in opulent circumstances. He has provided one with ample resources and another with scanty ones. A little thinking will convince a person that the variety in human culture is due only to those very differences and distinctions which are based on wisdom and perfect knowledge. That is why chaos of one sort or the other results whenever people artificially try either to aggravate these differences and distinctions or to eliminate them totally. The human tendency to envy others because of their superiority in anything generates jealousy, cut-throat competition, enmity, class struggle and the like with the resulting consequences. One who suffers from such a mentality tries to grab unlawfully that which Allah has not given him through His bounty. In this verse Allah has advised the Muslims to avoid such a mentality and keep themselves free from envying others. One should, however, pray to Allah for His bounty, for He will bestow upon him whatever He considers proper for him, because He has perfect knowledge of everything.

As regards "The men shall have their due share according to what they have earned, and the women shall have their share according to what they have earned," in my opinion it means that women should not envy men and men should not envy women because of any superiority the one has over the other because of Allah's bounty. They should make full use of whatever Allah has given them and rest assured that each one will get one's due share according to what good or evil one earns and of the same quality that one deserves.

55. The Arabs would enter into agreements of friendship and brotherhood with each other and on that score were entitled to the inheritance of each other. Thus, a god-son became heir of his god-father. Here this custom of "ignorance" has been abolished, and it has been enjoined that the inheritance should be divided

among the heirs according to the law prescribed by Allah. They are, however, allowed to give to such people, whatever they like during their lifetime.

56. The Arabic word *qavvām* or *qayyam* stands for a person who is responsible for the right conduct, safeguard and maintenance of the affairs of an individual, an institution or an organization. Thus, man is governor, director, protector and manager of the affairs of women.

57. Men are superior to women in the sense that they have been endowed with certain natural qualities and powers that have not been given to women or have been given in a less degree, and not in the sense that they are above them in honour and excellence. Man has been made *qavvām* (governor) of the family because of his natural qualities and woman has been made his dependent for her own safety and protection because of her natural drawbacks.

58. A tradition of the Holy Prophet is the best commentary on this. He said, "The best wife is the one who pleases you when you see her; who obeys your orders and who guards your property and her own honour when you are not at home."

In this connection, it is necessary to give a warning. Obedience to Allah is of far greater importance than obedience to the husband and has precedence over it. Therefore, it is the duty of the wife to refuse to obey her husband, if and when he orders her to do a thing which amounts to Allah's disobedience. In that case it shall be a sin to obey him. On the contrary, if the husband orders her not to observe a certain voluntary religious devotion, she must obey him, otherwise her devotion will not be accepted.

59. If the wife is defiant and does not obey her husband or does not guard his rights, three measures have been mentioned, but it does not mean that all the three are to be taken at one and the same time. Though these have been permitted, they are to be administered with a sense of proportion according to the nature and extent of the offence. If a mere light admonition proves effective, there is no need to resort to a severer step. As to a beating, the Holy Prophet allowed it very reluctantly and even then did not like it. But the fact is that there are certain women who do not mend their ways without a beating. In such a case, the Holy Prophet has instructed that she would not be beaten on the face, or cruelly, or with anything which might leave a mark on the body.

60. "The two sides" refers both to the arbiters and to the spouses. Reconciliation can be effected in every quarred, if the parties concerned desire it and if the arbiters try to effect it sincerely and justly.

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أَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ اللّٰهُ ؕ وَ كَانَ اللّٰهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيْمًا ﴿39﴾ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ
مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ ۚ وَإِنْ تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُّضٰعِفْهَا وَ يُؤْتِ مِنْ لَّدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿40﴾
فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيْدٍ وَّجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلٰى هٰٓؤُلَآءِ شَهِيْدًا ﴿41﴾
يَوْمَئِذٍ يَّوَدُّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَ عَصَوُا الرَّسُوْلَ لَوْ تُسَوّٰى بِهِمُ الْأَرْضُ ؕ وَ
لَا يَكْتُمُوْنَ اللّٰهَ حَدِيْثًا ﴿42﴾ يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَ أَنْتُمْ
سُكٰرٰى حَتّٰى تَعْلَمُوْا مَا تَقُوْلُوْنَ وَ لَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِيْ سَبِيْلٍ حَتّٰى
تَغْتَسِلُوْا ؕ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَّرْضٰٓى أَوْ عَلٰى سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَآءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنْكُمْ مِّنَ
الْغَآئِطِ أَوْ لٰمَسْتُمُ النِّسَآءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوْا مَآءً فَتَيَمَّمُوْا صَعِيْدًا طَيِّبًا
فَامْسَحُوْا بِوُجُوْهِكُمْ وَ أَيْدِيْكُمْ ؕ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا غَفُوْرًا ﴿43﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ
إِلَى الَّذِيْنَ أُوْتُوْا نَصِيْبًا مِّنَ الْكِتٰبِ يَشْتَرُوْنَ الضَّلٰلَةَ وَ يُرِيْدُوْنَ
أَنْ تَضِلُّوا السَّبِيْلَ ﴿44﴾ وَ اللّٰهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَآئِكُمْ ؕ وَ كَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ وَلِيًّا ۙ وَّ
كَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ نَصِيْرًا ﴿45﴾ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ هَادُوْا يُحَرِّفُوْنَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَّوَاضِعِهٖ
وَ يَقُوْلُوْنَ سَمِعْنَا وَ عَصَيْنَا وَ اسْمَعْ غَيْرَ مُسْمَعٍ وَّ رَاعِنَا لَيًّا بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ
وَ طَعْنًا فِي الدِّيْنِ ؕ وَ لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ قَالُوْا سَمِعْنَا وَ أَطَعْنَا وَ اسْمَعْ وَ انْظُرْنَا
لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَ أَقْوَمَ ۙ وَ لٰكِنْ لَّعَنَهُمُ اللّٰهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ إِلَّا
قَلِيْلًا ﴿46﴾ يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ أُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ اٰمِنُوْا بِمَا نَزَّلْنَا مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ مِّنْ
قَبْلِ أَنْ نَّطْمِسَ وُجُوْهًا فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلٰٓى أَدْبَارِهَآ أَوْ نَلْعَنَهُمْ كَمَا لَعَنَّآ
أَصْحٰبَ السَّبْتِ ؕ وَ كَانَ أَمْرُ اللّٰهِ مَفْعُوْلًا ﴿47﴾ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُّشْرَكَ
بِهٖ وَ يَغْفِرُ مَا دُوْنَ ذٰلِكَ لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۚ وَ مَنْ يُّشْرِكْ بِاللّٰهِ فَقَدِ افْتَرٰى

Well, what harm would have come upon them, if they had 39-42
believed in Allah and the Last Day and spent out of what Allah had given them? Had they done so, Allah would surely have had knowledge of their good deeds. Indeed Allah does not wrong anyone even by a jot: if one does a good deed, He doubles it, and then from Himself bestows a rich reward. Just imagine how they will fare, when We shall bring forward a witness from every community and raise you (O Muḥammad) as a witness in regard to these people[64]. At that time, all those, who rejected the Messenger and disobeyed him, would wish the earth to split open and swallow them; for there they will not be able to hide anything from Allah.

O Believers, do not offer the Prayer while you are 43
intoxicated,[65] for Prayer should be offered only when you know what you are saying.[66] Likewise, do not offer the Prayer if you are "unclean"[67] until you take your bath, except when passing on the way;[68] and if you are sick or on a journey or if any one of you has relieved himself or you have touched[69] women and can find no water, then cleanse yourselves with pure dust by rubbing it on your face and hands;[70] no doubt Allah is Lenient and Forgiving.

Have you ever considered the case of those who have been 44-46
given a portion of the scriptures?[71] They themselves purchase deviation and wish you, too, to go astray from the Right Way: Allah knows your enemies well and Allah suffices you for protection and for help. Some of those, who have become Jews,[72] pervert[73] words out of their context and twist their tongues in order to malign the true Faith and say "*sami'ina*[74] *wa 'asaina*" and "*Isma' ghaira musma'in*"[75] and "*Ra'ina*"[76]. But, if they had said instead, "*sami'ina wa ata'ana,*" "*Isma'*" and "*Unzurna,*" it would have been better for themselves and a more upright way. As Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, they are little disposed to believe.

O you to whom the Book had been given! Believe in the Book 47-48
We have sent down now, confirming the Book you already have with you;[77] believe in it before We distort faces and set them backwards, or lay Our curse on them as We laid Our curse on the Sabbath breakers:[78] and remember that Allah's Command is surely carried into effect. *Shirk* is the only sin that Allah does not forgive,[79] and He forgives whomsoever He pleases, other sins than this,[80] for whosoever

associates any other partner with Allah, does indeed forge a big lie and commit the most heinous sin.

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61. In this verse, a plan has been put forward for settling disputes between husband and wife within the family. An effort should be made to effect a reconciliation before resorting to a court of law or making the final breach. The plan is to appoint one arbiter from the family of each spouse for this purpose. The two should probe into the real cause or causes of the dispute and then try to find a way out of it. Of course, the relatives are best qualified for it, knowing as they do the true conditions of the spouses.

Allah has left it unanswered as to who should appoint the arbiters so that each spouse may appoint one arbiter from his or her relatives, if they desire to patch up their differences, or the leaders of the two families may take the initiative and entrust the work of reconciliation to two arbiters, or if the case goes to the court, it may appoint two arbiters before taking any action.

There is a difference of opinion regarding the powers of the arbiters. According to the Ḥanafi and the Shāfi'ī schools of thought, the arbiters are not authorized to pass any final decree but may recommend measures for reconciliation, which may be accepted or rejected by the spouses. Of course, if the spouses themselves authorize them to effect divorce or *khula'* or take any other measure, then they shall be bound to accept their decision. Ḥasan Baṣri, Qatādah and some other jurists are of the opinion that the arbiters are authorized to enforce reconciliation but not separation. Ibn 'Abbas, Said bin Jubair, Ibrahīm Nakha'i, Sha'bī, Muḥammad bin Sīrīn and some other jurists are of the opinion that the arbiters have full authority to enforce their decision about reconciliation or separation whichever they consider to be proper.

Caliph 'Uthmān and Caliph 'Alī used to authorize the arbiters appointed by them with full powers to effect reconciliation or separation as required by the circumstances. For instance, when the case of 'Aqīl, son of Abu Tālib, and his wife Fātimah, daughter of 'Utbah bin Rabī'ah, was brought in the court of Caliph 'Uthmān, he appointed as arbiter Ibn 'Abbās from the family of the husband and Mu'āviyah bin Abī Sufyān from the family of the wife and told them that they were authorised to cause separation between them, if required by circumstances. Likewise, Caliph 'Alī appointed arbiters in a similar case and authorised them to effect reconciliation between the spouses or separate them. This shows that the arbiters as such do not possess judicial powers, but if at the time of their appointment, the authority concerned empowers them with judicial powers, their decision shall be binding and enforced like other judicial decisions.

62. "*Assāhib-i-bil-janb*" as used in the Text may imply an intimate friend and also a person who accompanies one at any time. For instance, he may happen to accompany one in the street, or be a fellow customer at a shop, or be a fellow passenger in the bus or in the railway train, etc. Even such a temporary neighbourhood requires a civilized and noble person to treat the companion as far as possible kindly, and scrupulously avoid giving him any sort of trouble.

63. "To conceal the bounty of Allah" is to live in a way as if Allah has not bestowed His bounty upon him. For instance, a rich person conceals Allah's bounty, if he lives below his standard: neither spends money on his own person nor on the members of his family nor on the needy nor for any other good work. In short, his appearance would show him to be in very straitened circumstances. Obviously that is gross ingratitude to Allah.

A Tradition of the Holy Prophet says, "When Allah bestows His bounty on anyone, He likes that he should show it". That is, he should live the life of a well-to-do person who spends money on food, dress, house, furniture, etc., according to his means, and also in the way of Allah in order to show the blessing on him.

64. That is, the Prophet of every age will give evidence in the Court of Allah, saying: "Lord, I duly delivered Your message to my people and taught them the right way of life and the right mode of thought and practice which You taught me." Last of all, the Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings) will give this same evidence regarding the people of his term and his term, according to the Qur'ān extends from the time of his appointment as Prophet till Resurrection. (E.N. 69, Āl-'Imrān)

65. This is the second Commandment about drinking. The first Commandment (Al-Baqarah: 219) was that drinking is an evil thing and Allah does not approve of it. Accordingly some of the Muslims began to refrain from it from that time. The majority of them, however, did not give it up and often offered the Prayer in a state of intoxication and made blunders in their recitations. Probably, this second Commandment came in the beginning of A.H. 4 and prohibited the offering of the Prayer while one was drunk. As a result they changed the timings of their drinking so as not to clash with the timings of the Prayers. Some time after this, the Commandment about total prohibition as contained in Al-Mā'idah: 90-91 was sent down.

Incidentally, the word *sukr* (state of intoxication) as used in the Text also implies that this Commandment prohibits not only drinkig but every kind of intoxicant. Moreover, though every intoxicating thing is in itself unlawful, the

offence of intoxication is doubled and becomes more heinous, when the Prayer is offered in such a state.

66. For the same reason, the Holy Prophet has instructed that when one feels sleepy, and doses again and again during the Prayer, one should give up his Prayer and go to sleep.

Some people from this verse argue that the Prayer of the one who does not know the meaning of its Arabic Text, is no Prayer at all. But apart from the fact that it is an unnecessary hardship, the Arabic words of the Qur'ān do not support this version. The Qur'ān does not say, "unless you understand its meaning" or "unless you understand what you are saying" but it says "unless you know what you are saying". That is, one should be in his senses to know what he is uttering with his tongue lest he should recite, say, a poem, instead of the text of the Prayer.

67. The Arabic word *janābat* literally means being far off and stranger, and the word *ajnabi* (stranger) is derived from the same root. As an Islamic term it refers to that state of uncleanliness and impurity that is caused by the emission of seed by sexual intercourse or in sleep because this makes a person stranger to cleanliness.

68. A section of the jurists and commentators, such as 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Anas bin Mālik, Ḥasan Baṣri and Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī and others deduce from the words, "when passing on the way," that one shoud not enter a mosque in a state of "uncleanliness" except when one has to pass through it for some urgent piece of business. Another section of them, such as Ḥaḍrat 'Ali, Ibn 'Abbās, Sa'id bin Jubair and some others conclude from this that if one becomes "unclean" when on a journey, one may cleanse oneself by wiping one's face and hands with pure dust, if water is not available. As regards entering a mosque in such a state of "uncleanliness", the latter section is of the opinion that one may sit in the mosque after performing his ablutions (*wudū*). But there is almost a consensus of opinion that if one becomes "unclean" on a journey and water is not available for a bath, one may cleanse oneself with pure dust and offer the Prayer. However, the former section derives this opinion from the Traditions and the latter bases this concession on this part of verse 43.

69. There is a difference of opinion as to implication of "if you have touched women." Ḥaḍrat 'Alī, Ibn 'Abbās, Abū Mūsa Ash'arī, Ubaiyy Ibn Ka'b, Sa'id bin Jubair, Ḥasan Baṣrī and several other jurists are of the opinion that here "have touched" means "have had sexual intercourse". Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and those of his way of thinking and Imām Sufyān Thauri have adopted the same interpretation. On the contrary, Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud and 'Abdullah bin 'Umar and (according to some traditions) Ḥaḍrat 'Umar also are of the opinion

that the word "touched" actually means "touching with the hand" and Imām Shāfi'ī has adopted this version. Some jurists, such as Imām Mālik, have adopted a middle course and expressed the opinion that if the touch between a man and a woman is of sexual nature, they shall have to make fresh ablutions for the Prayer but if their bodies touch each others without any feeling of sensuality, there is nothing wrong in this.

70. If one has to perform ablutions or take a bath before offering one's *Ṣalat* and water is not available, one is allowed to resort to *tayammum*; or, if one is sick and there is a danger that the disease would worsen if one performs ablutions or takes a bath, one is allowed to resort to *tayammum* even if water is available.

Literally *tayammum* means "to turn to"; that is, one should turn to pure dust when water is not available, or if its use is harmful. There is a difference of opinion concerning the method of performing *tayammum*. The majority of the jurists, such as Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, Imām Shafi'ī and Imām Mālik, prescribe that one should strike one's hands on pure dust and wipe one's face with them; then one should again strike one's hands and wipe one's hands up to the elbows with them. This method has been prescribed by some Companions of the Holy Prophet and their followers such as Ḥaḍrat 'Ali, 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, Ḥasan Baṣrī, Sha'bi and Salim bin 'Abdullah and others. But some jurists such as 'Aṭa', Mak-hūl, Auza'ī and Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal consider it enough to strike one's hands only once on pure dust and wipe the face and the hands up to the wrists and not up to the elbows. The Ahl-i-Ḥadith, in general, follow this method.

For the performance of *tayammum*, it is not essential only to strike one's hands on pure earth: any dusty thing or dry piece of earth suffices for this purpose.

Some people object to this method of cleansing; they say, "How can one be cleansed by striking one's hands on dust and wiping the face and hands up to the elbows with these? Let them look upon this method from the psychological point of view. *Tayammum* helps keep alive the feelings of cleansing oneself and of the sanctity of the Prayer, even if one is not able to use water for a long time. Thus, a Muslim will always keep in view the rules of purity and cleanliness prescribed by the Islamic Code and will scrupulously be mindful of his state of cleanliness and purity for the observance of the Prayer.

71. About the scholars of the people of the Book the Qur'an at many places has used words to the effect: "They have been given a part of the knowledge of the Scripture". These words have been used because the scholars had actually lost a portion of their Scriptures and had become strangers to the spirit

[Contd. on p. 341

إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا ﴿48﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يُزَكُّونَ أَنفُسَهُم ۚ بَلِ اللَّهُ يُزَكِّي مَن
يَشَاءُ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿49﴾ انظُرْ كَيْفَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ ۖ وَكَفَىٰ
بِهِ إِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿50﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُؤْمِنُونَ
بِالْجِبْتِ وَالطَّاغُوتِ وَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَٰؤُلَاءِ أَهْدَىٰ مِنَ الَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا سَبِيلًا ﴿51﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۖ وَمَن يَلْعَنِ اللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ
لَهُ نَصِيرًا ﴿52﴾ أَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُلْكِ فَإِذًا لَّا يُؤْتُونَ النَّاسَ نَقِيرًا ﴿53﴾
أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ ۖ فَقَدْ آتَيْنَا آلَ
إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَآتَيْنَاهُم مُّلْكًا عَظِيمًا ﴿54﴾ فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ آمَنَ
بِهِ وَمِنْهُم مَّن صَدَّ عَنْهُ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِجَهَنَّمَ سَعِيرًا ﴿55﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
بِآيَاتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِمْ نَارًا ۖ كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُم بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا
غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿56﴾ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۖ لَّهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ ۖ وَنُدْخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا
ظَلِيلًا ﴿57﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا ۙ وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُم
بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَن تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُم بِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴿58﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ
وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ ۖ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ
إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴿59﴾
أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن

Have you also marked those, who speak very highly of their own purity? However, Allah alone purifies whomever He pleases (and if they are not being purified), no injustice is being done to them in the least. Just behold! they do not hesitate to invent lies about Allah, and this sin alone suffices to show that they are manifest sinners. 49-50

Have you not observed those who have been given a portion of the Book? They believe in *jibt* [81] and *tāghūt* [82] and say of the disbelievers, "Even they are more rightly guided on the way[83] than the Believers." Such are the people whom Allah has cursed and you will find no helper to the one whom Allah curses. Have they any share in the Kingdom? If they had any, they would never have given even a farthing to anyone.[84] Or, are they jealous of others, because Allah has blessed them with His bounty?[85] If so, let them know that We did bestow the Book and the Wisdom upon the descendants of Abraham and blessed them with the great kingdom.[86] But some of them believed in it and others turned away from it,[87] and the burning fire of Hell suffices for those who have turned away from it. Surely We will throw into the Fire those who have rejected Our Revelations; as often as their skins shall be consumed, We will replace them by other skins so that they may taste the torment in full, for Allah is All-Powerful and All-Wise to enforce His decrees. As for those, who have believed in Our Revelations and have done righteous deeds, We will admit them to Gardens underneath which canals flow, wherein they will abide for ever, wherein they will have pure spouses, and We will admit them into thick shades. 51-57

(O Muslims), Allah enjoins you to give the trusts into the care of those persons who are worthy of trust and to judge with justice,[88] when you judge between the people. Excellent is the counsel that Allah gives you, for Allah hears everything and sees everything. 58

O Believers, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those entrusted with authority from among you. Then if there arises any dispute about anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger,[89] if you truly believe in Allah and the Last Day. This is the only right way and will be best in regard to the end.[90] 59

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and the real aim and object of the portion left with them. The only interest they took in these was confined to polemical controversies, minor details of

Commandments and philosophical subtleties of creed. That is why they were ignorant of the true nature of religion and were void of its essence, though they were called "Divines" and "Rabbis" and were the acknowledged leaders of their community.

72. The words used are: "who have become Jews" and not "who are Jews," for originally they were "Muslims" just as the community of every Prophet is Muslim. Then afterwards they degenerated and became merely "Jews".

73. They were guilty of perversion in three ways: (1) They effected changes in the words of the Scriptures; (2) they distorted the meanings of the text with false interpretaions, and (3) they would sit in the assemblies of the Holy Prophet and his Companions and afterwards make false reports of what they heard there in order to create mischief against them by distortion. They would thus spread misunderstandings about Islam and pervert people from joining the Islamic Community.

74. That is, when the Commandments of Allah are recited to them, they say *sami'na* (we have heard) aloud and *'aṣainā* (we have rejected) in a low voice, or they pronounce the word *ata'nā* (we have obeyed) with such a twist of the tongue that it sounds as *'asainā*.

75. During their talk with the Holy Prophet, they would invite his attention, saying, *Isma'ā* (please listen to us), and would add *ghaira musma' in*, which has several meanings. It may mean : "You are such a respectable man that one cannot utter any word before you against your will", but it may also imply : "You are not worthy that one may speak to you." Another meaning is : "May Allah make you deaf!"

76. For this please refer to E.N. 105, Al-Baqarah.

77. Please refer to E.N. 2, Āl -i-'Imrān.

78. Please refer to E.N.'s 82 and 83, Al-Baqarah.

79. The people of the Book have been admonished for being guilty of *shirk*, though they professed to believe in the Prophets and the revealed Books.

80. This does not mean that if one refrains from *shirk*, then one may freely indulge in other sins. This is merely to bring home to them the gravity of this heinous sin, which they regarded as a trivial thing. That is why the warning has been given that *shirk* is the most heinous of all sins; so much so that this is the only sin for which forgiveness is not possible.

The Jewish Rabbis were very particular in the observance of minor laws; nay, they spent most of their time in measuring and weighing those regulations

which were not explicitly mentioned in their Scriptures but were derived from them. On the contrary, they regarded *shirk* as a trivial matter: they not only themselves were involved in it but they did not try to save their community from *shirk* and acts of *shirk*. Accordingly, they did not consider that there was anything wrong in entering into alliance with *mushrik* communities and helping them.

81. Literally, *jibt* means an unreal, baseless and useless thing. In the Islamic terminology, sorcery, magic, divination, omen-taking and the like superstitious practices are called *jibt*. A Tradition of the Holy Prophet says, "Taking omens from the sounds of the birds and the footmarks of the animals and all other methods of divination are *jibt*." Thus *jibt* is the equivalent of supersitition.

82. Please refer to E.N.'s 286 and 288, Al-Baqarah.

83. The Jewish Rabbis had gone so low in their opposition to Islam that they regarded the followers of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) as more misguided than even the Arab *Mushriks*, and declared the latter to be more rightly-guided though it was quite obvious to them that on one side there was the worship of One God without any tinge of *shirk*, and on the other, idolatry which had been thoroughly condemned in the Bible.

84. That is, "Do they possess any portion of Divine Authority that they are sitting in judgement on the case to decide who is rightly guided and who is not?" "Had they any part in it, they would never have given a farthing to anyone else because they are so narrowminded that they are not even ready to acknowledge the Truth"

It may also imply: Do they possess the kingdom of a country from which others are demanding a share, and they are finding it hard to part with it? What is being demanded of them is merely the acknowledgement of the Truth, and this they are refusing on account of jealousy.

85. Here they are being rebuked for showing jealousy against the Holy Prophet and his followers because they were blessed with Allah's Bounty (Prophethood) for which they themselves were looking forward in spite of being unworthy of it. Instead of showing regret for their own unworthiness which caused the loss of the Bounty, they were showing resentment against the Holy Prophet who had by His Bounty brought about the greatest spiritual, moral and intellectual revolution in Arabia with its resulting leadership and greatness. It was their jealousy that was urging them to side with the *mushriks*, and to criticise the Muslims.

86. .... *"Mulk-i-azim"* refers to the leadership and guidance of the world and to the superiority over other nations that is gained by putting into practice the knowledge and wisdom of the Divine Book.

87. It must be kept in mind that this is the answer to the jealous talk of the children of Israel. It implies this: "Why do you feel jealous of the Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be peace) and his followers? You are the descendants of the Prophet Abraham (upon whom be peace) and so are the children of Ishmael his descendants. We promised the Prophet Abraham that We would bestow leadership of the world upon those of his descendants who would follow the Book and the Wisdom sent down by Us. At first We sent down the Book and the Wisdom to you, who belong to one line of his descendants, but you proved incapable of this. Now We have sent down the same to the children of Ishmael the second line of Abraham's descendants. They have accepted it, believed in it and followad it practically. Now answer for yourselves whether you have any ground of jealousy and resentment against the childern of Ishmael."

88. Here the Muslims have been fore-warned that they should avoid those evils in which the children of Israel were involved. Their basic error was that during their degeneration they entrusted the positions of trust to incompetent people. They began to entrust positions of responsibility and religious and political leadership to inefficient, narrow-minded, immoral, dishonest and wicked people. As a result, the whole community became corrupt. The Muslims are being cautioned against this evil and enjoined to entrust positions of responsibility to qualified and competent people of good moral character.

Another evil that was prevalent among the Jews was injustice. They had lost the very sense and spirit of justice and become utterly unjust, openly dishonest, and sinfully obdurate and would commit acts of gross injustice without any pangs of conscience. The Muslims were personally having a bitter experience of this. The Jews were siding with the idolatrous Quraish against the Believers in one God though the lives of the two clearly showed "who was more rightly guided." On the one side, they saw the pure lives of the Holy Prophet and his followers; on the other, they witnessed the immoral lives of their enemies, who buried their daughters alive, married their step mothers and went round the Ka'bah in naked state. Still these "people of the Book" preferred the idolatrous people to the Believers and brazen-facedly declared that the former were more rightly guided than the latter. Allah warns the Believers against this sort of injustice and enjoins them always to say what is just and right and judge between the people with justice whether they be friends or foes.

89. This verse is the basis of the whole religious, cultural and political system of Islam and is the first and foremost article of the constitution of an Islamic State. It lays down permanently the following fundamental principles:

(1) In the Islamic system, Allah is the real Authority who must be obeyed. A Muslim is first of all the servant of Allah; all his other capacities come after

this. Therefore, a Muslim as an individual and the Muslims as a community owe their first loyalty to Allah and they must subordinate all other loyalites to this. Allegiance and obedience to anyone else shall be acknowledged only if these are not opposed to the allegiance and obedience to Allah but are subordinate to it. All other allegiances that are opposed to this basic allegiance shall be broken asunder. The Holy Prophet has explained the same thing in a Tradition: "There is no obedience to any of His creatures in what involves disobedience to the Creator."

(2) The second fundamental principle of the Islamic system is allegiance and obedience to the Holy Prophet. This obedience is not inherent in Prophethood but is only practical shape of obedience to Allah. A Messenger is to be obeyed because he is the authentic means through which we can receive Commandments and instructions from Allah. Hence, we can obey Allah only by obeying His Messenger, for no other way of obedience is genuine. As a corollary of this, the breach of allegiance to the Messenger shall be a rebellion against the Sovereign, Whom he represents. A Tradition explains the same thing thus: "Whoever obeys me, obeys Allah and whoever disobeys me, disobeys Allah." The same thing has also been explicitly stated in v. 80 of this Sūrah.

(3) After the first and the second allegiance, and subordinate to these, the Muslims owe allegiance to those invested with authority from among themselves. The Arabic word *ulil-amr* is very comprehensive, which comprises all those persons who are in any way at the helm of the affairs of the Muslims-religious scholars, thinkers, political leaders, administrators, judges of law courts, tribal chiefs and the like. In short, all those, who are in any way invested with authority from among the Muslims, are to be obeyed, and it is not right to disturb the peace of the community life of the Muslims by entering into conflict with them, provided that *(a)* they are from among the Muslims, and *(b)* they are obedient to Allah and His Messenger. These two conditions are a pre-requisite for obedience to them, and these have been explicitly laid down in the verse and have also been fully explained by the Holy Prophet. In support of this some Traditions are cited below:

(a) "It is obligatory on a Muslim to listen to and obey orders of those invested with authority, whether he likes it or dislikes it, provided that it is not sinful. However, if he is ordered to do a sinful thing, he should neither listen to the rulers nor obey their orders." (Bukhārī, Muslim).

(b) "Obedience to anyone in a sinful thing is forbidden. Obedience is obligatory only in what is right." (Bukhāri, Muslim).

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قَبْلِكَ يُرِيْدُوْنَ اَنْ يَّتَحَاكَمُوْٓا اِلَى الطَّاغُوْتِ وَقَدْ اُمِرُوْٓا اَنْ يَّكْفُرُوْا بِهٖ ؕ
وَيُرِيْدُ الشَّيْطٰنُ اَنْ يُّضِلَّهُمْ ضَلٰلًۢا بَعِيْدًا ﴿60﴾ وَاِذَا قِيْلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا اِلٰى
مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ وَاِلَى الرَّسُوْلِ رَاَيْتَ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ يَصُدُّوْنَ عَنْكَ صُدُوْدًا ﴿61﴾
فَكَيْفَ اِذَآ اَصَابَتْهُمْ مُّصِيْبَةٌۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ اَيْدِيْهِمْ ثُمَّ جَآءُوْكَ يَحْلِفُوْنَ ۖ
بِاللّٰهِ اِنْ اَرَدْنَآ اِلَّآ اِحْسَانًا وَّتَوْفِيْقًا ﴿62﴾ اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ يَعْلَمُ اللّٰهُ مَا
فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ ۗ فَاَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُلْ لَّهُمْ فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا
بَلِيْغًا ﴿63﴾ وَمَآ اَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُوْلٍ اِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَلَوْ اَنَّهُمْ
اِذْ ظَّلَمُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ جَآءُوْكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللّٰهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُوْلُ
لَوَجَدُوا اللّٰهَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿64﴾ فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ حَتّٰى يُحَكِّمُوْكَ
فِيْمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوْا فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَ
يُسَلِّمُوْا تَسْلِيْمًا ﴿65﴾ وَلَوْ اَنَّا كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ اَنِ اقْتُلُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ اَوِ اخْرُجُوْا
مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ مَّا فَعَلُوْهُ اِلَّا قَلِيْلٌ مِّنْهُمْ ؕ وَلَوْ اَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوْا مَا يُوْعَظُوْنَ
بِهٖ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَاَشَدَّ تَثْبِيْتًا ﴿66﴾ وَّاِذًا لَّاٰتَيْنٰهُمْ مِّنْ لَّدُنَّآ اَجْرًا
عَظِيْمًا ﴿67﴾ وَّلَهَدَيْنٰهُمْ صِرَاطًا مُّسْتَقِيْمًا ﴿68﴾ وَمَنْ يُّطِعِ اللّٰهَ وَالرَّسُوْلَ
فَاُولٰٓئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِيْنَ اَنْعَمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنَ النَّبِيّٖنَ وَالصِّدِّيْقِيْنَ وَ
الشُّهَدَآءِ وَالصّٰلِحِيْنَ ۚ وَحَسُنَ اُولٰٓئِكَ رَفِيْقًا ﴿69﴾ ذٰلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ
اللّٰهِ ؕ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ عَلِيْمًا ﴿70﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا خُذُوْا حِذْرَكُمْ فَانْفِرُوْا
ثُبَاتٍ اَوِ انْفِرُوْا جَمِيْعًا ﴿71﴾ وَاِنَّ مِنْكُمْ لَمَنْ لَّيُبَطِّئَنَّ ۚ فَاِنْ اَصَابَتْكُمْ
مُّصِيْبَةٌ قَالَ قَدْ اَنْعَمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيَّ اِذْ لَمْ اَكُنْ مَّعَهُمْ شَهِيْدًا ﴿72﴾ وَلَئِنْ

O Prophet, have you not marked those who profess to believe 60-65
in the Book that have been sent down to you and in the Books that had been sent down before you, and yet want to turn to *ṭāghūt* for the judgement of their cases though they have been bidden to reject *ṭāghūt*?[91] Satan intends to lead them far astray from the right path. And when it is said to them, "Come to that thing which Allah has sent down and to the Messenger," you see that the hypocrites show hesitation in coming to you.[92] But how do they behave when a disaster befalls them as a consequence of their own doings? They come to you with oath,[93] saying, "We swear by God that we only meant to promote the good and bring about a reconciliation between the parties." Allah knows what really is in their hearts: therefore show forbearance towards them and admonish them and give them a piece of advice that may go deep into their hearts. (Tell them) "Every Messenger whom We have sent must be obeyed because Allah has enjoined this."[94] When they had wronged themselves, the best thing for them would have been to come to you and implore Allah's pardon, and if the Messenger had also asked Allah's forgiveness for them, most surely they would have found Allah Forgiving and Merciful. Nay, O Muḥammad, by your Lord, they can never become Believers until they accept you as judge for the decision of the disputes between them, and then surrender to your decision with entire submission without feeling the least resentment in their hearts.[95]

(As for them), only a few of them would have acted upon it, if 66-70
We had enjoined them, "Kill yourselves," or "Leave your homes"[96]. It would have been better for them and it would have made them firm[97]. (in their Faith), if they had done what they were commanded to do, for We would have given them a great reward from Ourselves and shown them the straight path.[98] And who-so-ever obeys Allah and the Messenger, shall be with those whom Allah has blessed-the Prophets, the truthful and the martyrs and the righteous:[99] what excellent companions these are that one may get![100] This is the real bounty which comes from Allah and Allah's knowledge suffices to know the Reality.

O Believers, be always prepared for encounter,[101] and advance 71-72
in detachments or march in a body, as the occasion may require. Well, there are among you such as shirk fight;[102] if a disaster befalls you,

they say, "Allah has been very gracious to us that we did not accompany these people."

Contd. from p.345]

(c) The Holy Prophet said, "There will be rulers over you who will practise right things as well as wrong things. (In such a case) whoever protests against the wrong things, shall be absolved from the responsibility and whoever dislikes the wrong things, also shall escape (punishment). But whoever approves of and follows them, shall incur punishment." The Companions asked, "Should we not then fight against such rulers?" The Holy Prophet answered, "No, as long as they offer the *Ṣalat.*" (Muslim)

That is, if they discard the *Ṣalat*, it will be a clear proof of their disobedience to Allah and His Messenger. Then it will be right to rise against them.

(d) The Holy Prophet said, "Your worst rulers are those whom you hate and who hate you, whom you curse and who curse you." The Companions asked, "O Messenger of God, should we not rise against such rulers?" The Holy Prophet answered, "No, as long as they establish the *Ṣalat* among you." (Muslim)

In this Tradition, the condition about the *Ṣalat* laid down in the preceding one, has been made more explicit. One might have inferred from *(c)* that if they offered the *Ṣalat* in their individual capacities, no rising should be organised against them. But Tradition *(d)* explicitly lays down that the condition for obedience to those in authority is the establishment of the system of *Ṣalat* by them in the Muslim Community. The rulers should not only themselves offer the *Ṣalat* regularly, but they should also establish the *Ṣalat* in the system of government run by them. This is the minimum condition that makes a government Islamic in principle. If a government lacks this, it will mean that such a government has discarded Islam, and the Muslims will be justified in overthrowing it. This same thing has also been stated in another Tradition thus: "The Holy Prophet took a covenant from us regarding certain things. One of these was that we would not engage in a dispute with those invested with authority unless we saw in them clear signs of disbelief, which may provide us with a cogent reason to present before Allah." (Bukhāri, Muslim)

(4) The fourth thing that has been laid down as an absolute and permanent principle is that the Commandments of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger are the fundamentals of law and final authority in the Islamic system. Hence, if a dispute arises about any matter between the Muslims or between the rulers and the ruled, they should turn to the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* for a decision and they should all submit to the decision. Thus, the

essential element in the Islamic system that distinguishes it from un-Islamic systems is to acknowledge the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger as the final authority and to turn to these and to submit to their decisions in all problems of life. Any system void of this is most surely an un-Islamic system.

Some people doubt the soundness of this principle. They say that it fails in practical life for the simple reason that there are many aspects of life (*e.g.*, Local Self department. Railway department, Postal department, etc. etc.,) for which there are no rules and regulations at all in the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger. How then can they find the solution of the problems they meet with in such aspects of life as concern such departments? This doubt arises because they do not understand the fundamental principles of Islam. *Islam allows freedom of action in all those things about which the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger are silent.* What distinguishes a Muslim from a non-Muslim is that the latter claims absolute freedom but the former considers himself to be the servant of Allah and uses only that amount of freedom which Islam allows him. The non-Muslim judges all matters in accordance with the rules and regulations made by himself and does not believe that he stands in need of Divine Guidance. In contrast to him, the Muslim, first of all, turns to Allah and His Messenger for guidance about everything and abides by their decision. But if he does not find any commandment therein about a certain thing, only then he is free to act in a manner he considers to be right. The very fact that the Law is silent about a certain thing, is a proof that it allows freedom of action in that particular matter.

90. In the first part of this verse, the Qur'ān enunciates the four fundamental principles of the Islamic Constitution, and in the second part teaches the wisdom that underlies them. The Muslims have been enjoined to follow the four fundamental principles if they are true believers; otherwise their profession of Islam will become doubtful. Then they have been taught to build their system of life on these because therein also lies their well-being; for this alone can keep them on the right path in this world and lead them to a happy life in the Hereafter.

It should also be noted that this piece of advice follows the critical review of the moral and religious condition of the Jews and warns the Muslims in a subtle manner to learn a lesson from their deplorable condition. It says that whenever a community flings the Book of Allah and the guidance of His Messenger behind its back and follows such leaders as are disobedient to Allah and His Messenger, and blindly obeys its rulers and religious leaders without demanding from them the authority of the Book and the *Sunnah*, it can never escape those evils in which the children of Israel were involved.

91. In this verse, *ṭāghūt* clearly stands for the authority that makes decisions in accordance with laws other than Divine and the system of judiciary which acknowledges neither Allah as the Supreme Sovereign nor His Book as the final authority. Hence, this verse is explained that it is contrary to Faith to take one's case for decision to a law court which by its nature is that of *ṭāghūt*. Belief in Allah and His Book makes it obligatory on the Believer that he should refuse to acknowledge such a court as lawful. According to the Qur'ān, belief in Allah and disbelief in *ṭāghūt* are correlatives; therefore to acknowledge both at one and the same time is nothing but hypocrisy itself.

92. This shows that the hypocrites used to bring only such cases before the Holy Prophet as were likely to be decided in their favour, but would refrain from bringing such cases, which they feared, would be decided against them. The same is true of many hypocrites of today: they are ever ready to submit to the decisions of the Islamic Law if and whenever it goes in their favour; otherwise they resort to any law, any custom, and any law court which, they expect, will ensure their interests.

93. Probably it means that when their hypocritical deeds are exposed and they fear that action will be taken against them; they take oaths to assure the Believers of their innocence.

94. It clearly defines the position of the Messenger: the Messenger does not come from Allah so that the people should simply acknowledge him as a Messenger and then continue to obey anyone they like. The Messenger is sent with the sole object that the code of life brought by him only should be followed instead of all other codes, and the commandments brought by him from Allah only should be obeyed instead of all other commandments. If anyone does not acknowledge the Messenger in this sense, his acknowledging him merely as a Messenger would be meaningless.

95. The commandment contained in verse 65 was not meant to be confined to the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, but it was to hold good up to the Last Day. Whatever the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) brought from Allah and whatever way of life he followed and practised under His guidance and inspiration, shall remain the final authority among Muslims for ever and the acknowledgement of that authority alone determines whether one is a true Muslim or not. According to a Tradition, the Holy Prophet said: "None of you can claim to be a believer unless he subordinates his desires and lusts to the way that I have brought."

96. In verse 65, they have been admonished to submit gracefully and sincerely to the way of life brought by the Holy Prophet and to subordinate their desires and interests to his decision. In this verse they have been warned that if

they cannot sacrifice even their small interests in following the Islamic Law, they can never be expected to make any bigger sacrifice. If they were asked to sacrifice their lives or leave their homes in the way of God, they would then discard totally the way of Faith and obedience and follow the ways of disbelief and disobedience instead.

97. That is, "If they had given up doubt, hesitation and indecision and obeyed and followed the Messenger without any mental reservation, their position would have become firm and stable and their thoughts, their morals and their affairs would have secured a strong and permanent foundation. In short, they would have enjoyed all those blessings that are obtained by following steadfastly a straight royal road. On the contrary, the one who wavers in indecision and irresolution, and sometimes takes one road and then another, without faith in either, his whole life passes without any achievement and becomes an object lesson of failure."

98. That is, if they had resolved to obey the Holy Messenger sincerely without harbouring any doubts in their minds, the right way of life would have become very clear to them by the grace of Allah, and they would have clearly seen as to how they should employ their energy and effort so as to get further and further close to their real goal in life."

99. *Ṣiddīq* is one who is upright and just; who is always actuated by truth and righteousness; who is fair and equitable in all his dealings; who always sides with truth and justice from the core of his heart; who opposes tooth and nail all that is unfair, without showing the least weakness; who is so pure and so unselfish that both friends and foes expect nothing but impartiality from him.

The literal meaning of *shahīd* is "a witness". It implies the one who bears witness to the truth of his Faith by following it in all aspects of his life. A martyr also is a *shahīd* because he willingly suffers death by fighting in the cause of Allah. By sacrificing his life for the cause he believes to be true, he gives a practical demonstration of the sincerity of his Faith. Those righteous people who are so trustworthy that their mere evidence for anything to be true is a sufficient proof of its genuineness are also *shahīd*.

Ṣalīḥ is one who is upright in his beliefs, intentions, words and actions and adopts the right attitude in every aspect of life.

100. That is, "Undoubtedly the person who enjoys the company of such people in this world and rises with them in the Hereafter is really very fortunate." Unless one's feelings are totally deadened, one is bound to feel that the company of evil and immoral people is a painful torment even in this world and it would be

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اَصَابَكُمْ فَضْلٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ لَيَقُوْلَنَّ كَاَنْ لَّمْ تَكُنْۢ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهٗ مَوَدَّةٌ
يّٰلَيْتَنِيْ كُنْتُ مَعَهُمْ فَاَفُوْزَ فَوْزًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿73﴾ فَلْيُقَاتِلْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ
الَّذِيْنَ يَشْرُوْنَ الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْاٰخِرَةِ ۭ وَمَنْ يُّقَاتِلْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ
فَيُقْتَلْ اَوْ يَغْلِبْ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيْهِ اَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿74﴾ وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُوْنَ
فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِيْنَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاۗءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِيْنَ
يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَآ اَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هٰذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ اَهْلُهَا ۚ وَاجْعَلْ لَّنَا
مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا ۚ وَّاجْعَلْ لَّنَا مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ نَصِيْرًا ﴿75﴾ اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا
يُقَاتِلُوْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا يُقَاتِلُوْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ الطَّاغُوْتِ
فَقَاتِلُوْٓا اَوْلِيَاۗءَ الشَّيْطٰنِ ۚ اِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطٰنِ كَانَ ضَعِيْفًا ﴿76﴾ اَلَمْ تَرَ اِلَى
الَّذِيْنَ قِيْلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوْٓا اَيْدِيَكُمْ وَاَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ ۚ فَلَمَّا
كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ اِذَا فَرِيْقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللّٰهِ
اَوْ اَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً ۚ وَقَالُوْا رَبَّنَا لِمَ كَتَبْتَ عَلَيْنَا الْقِتَالَ ۚ لَوْلَآ اَخَّرْتَنَآ
اِلٰٓى اَجَلٍ قَرِيْبٍ ۭ قُلْ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيْلٌ ۚ وَالْاٰخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ اتَّقٰى ۣ
وَلَا تُظْلَمُوْنَ فَتِيْلًا ﴿77﴾ اَيْنَ مَا تَكُوْنُوْا يُدْرِكْكُّمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِيْ
بُرُوْجٍ مُّشَيَّدَةٍ ۭ وَاِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَّقُوْلُوْا هٰذِهٖ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَ
اِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَّقُوْلُوْا هٰذِهٖ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ ۭ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ ۭ
فَمَالِ هٰٓؤُلَاۗءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُوْنَ يَفْقَهُوْنَ حَدِيْثًا ﴿78﴾ مَآ اَصَابَكَ مِنْ
حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللّٰهِ ۡ وَمَآ اَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَّفْسِكَ ۭ وَاَرْسَلْنٰكَ
لِلنَّاسِ رَسُوْلًا ۭ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ شَهِيْدًا ﴿79﴾ مَنْ يُّطِعِ الرَّسُوْلَ فَقَدْ اَطَاعَ

And if you are blessed with grace from Allah, they say, — as 73-76
though there never had been any friendly relations between you and them "We wish we had also accompanied them and thus would have gained our end." (Let such people understand that) those alone, who barter away this worldly life for that of the Hereafter,[103] should fight in the way of Allah; then We will bestow a great reward upon him who fights in the way of Allah whether he be slain or be victorious. Why should you, then, not fight in the way of Allah for the sake of those helpless men, women and children who, being weak, have been oppressed, and are crying out, "Our Lord, deliver us from this habitation whose inhabitants are unjust oppressors, and raise a protector for us by Thy grace and a helper from Thyself."[104] Those, who follow the way of Faith, fight in the way of Allah, and those who follow the way of disbelief fight in the way of *ṭāghūt*.[105] So fight against the helpers of Satan with this conviction that Satan's crafty schemes are in fact very weak.[106]

Have you also marked those to whom it was said, "Withhold 77-78
your hands (a while from war) and establish the *Ṣalāt* and pay the *Zakāt*? Now that they have been commanded to fight, some of them fear the people as they should fear Allah, or even more than that;[107] they say, 'Our Lord, why have You prescribed fighting for us? Why have You not given us further respite?" Say to them, "The pleasures of this worldly life are trifling and the life of the Hereafter is much better for a man who fears Allah, and you shall not be wronged in the least.[108] As to death, it will overtake you wherever you may be, even though you be in fortified towers" If they have good fortune, they say, "This is from Allah," and if they suffer a loss, they say, "This is because of you."[109] Say, "Everything is from Allah." What then has gone wrong with these people that they do not understand anything? Whatever good comes to you, O man, it is by Allah's grace, and whatever evil befalls you, it is the result of your own doings.

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101. It should be noted that this address was revealed at the time when the neighbouring tribes had been emboldened by the defeat of the Muslims at Uhd. They were surrounded by danger on all sides and were hearing persistent rumours about the active hostilities of, and imminent attacks from, different quarters. There were cases of treachery also. The Muslim missionaries were invited cunningly to

preach Islam, and then killed. There was no security of life and property beyond the outskirts of Madinah. These circumstances urgently required that the Muslims should struggle hard to save the Islamic Movement from failure and destruction in the face of such overwhelming threats.

102. The other meanings are that not only he himself shows lack of courage to face danger but also discourages and dissuades others from *Jihād*

103. That is, "Let them clearly understand that those people, who hanker after worldly benefits only, are not fit to fight in the way of Allah. On the countrary, only those people are worthy of fighting in the way of Allah who have no other desire or object than to please Him and who have perfect belief in Allah and the Hereafter and are, therefore, ready to sacrifice all interests and all chances of prosperity and enjoyment in this world for the sake of pleasing their Lord. They sincerely believe that their sacrifices will not go in vain in the Hereafter, even if they might not have been "successful" in this life. Thus it is obvious that those who attach real importance only to their worldly interests cannot tread the path of Allah."

104. This was the cry of the poor and helpless children, men and women who had accepted Islam at Makkah and at other places but had no means of migrating to Madinah, or defending themselves from persecution. They were being persecuted and oppressed in all sorts of manners and were invoking the help of Allah to deliver them from that horrible state.

105. In the sight of Allah, there are two distinct parties of fighters. One party is that of the Believers who fight for the cause of Allah in order to establish his way on His earth, and every sincere Believer is bound to perform this duty. The other party is that of unbelievers who fight in the way of *ṭāghūt* so as to establish the rule of the rebels against Allah on His earth and no Believer would side with them in this evil work.

106. The Believers have been assured that they should not be cowed and terrified by the apparent grand preparations and evil designs of Satan and his companions: because ultimately they are bound to fail.

107. This verse has three meanings, and all three are equally correct.

First, it means that those very people who were then showing cowardice were very impatient to fight before permission was given for this. They would repeat the tales of their persecution and oppression and say, "Give us permission to fight, for we have no more patience left to bear these wrongs." At that time when they were advised to be patient for the time being and to purify themselves by means of *Ṣalāt* and *Zakāt*, they would resent such pieces of advice. But when

the Command to fight was given, some of those very people began to show cowardice when they confronted the enemy armies and the dangers of war.

The second meaning is that those people were very 'religious' as long as such harmless demands as the offering of *Ṣalāt* and the payment of *Zakāt* were made; but no sooner was the demand to fight in the way of Allah made on them than they were filled with terror and fear for their lives, and they forgot all about their religiosity.

The third meaning is that during the pre-Islamic period, they were ready to fight for the sake of the spoils or for the gratification of their whims, and were engaged day and night in war. That is why, after embracing Islam, they were enjoined to desist a while from fighting and to reform their souls by means of the *Ṣalāt* and *Zakāt*. But when they were enjoined to fight in the way of Allah, the same people who showed reckless bravery in fighting for the sake of false pride, were showing timidity, and those who were dare-devils turned into milksops and shirked fight.

The above mentioned three meanings apply to the three different categories of people and the words of the Arabic text are so comprehensive that they fit equally into all the three cases.

108. That is, "You need not worry about your reward from Allah for the service you render to His cause. If you exert your utmost in His way, Allah will not let your work go waste."

109. They have been admonished for their attitude towards the Holy Prophet. When there was success and victory, they would attribute it to Allah's grace and forgot that Allah had blessed them with grace through him. But when they suffered a defeat or had a set-back because of their own errors and weaknesses, they would lay the whole blame on the Holy Prophet, and would absolve themselves from all responsibility.

اللّٰهَ ۚ وَمَنْ تَوَلّٰى فَمَآ اَرْسَلْنٰكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيْظًا ﴿٨٠﴾ وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ طَاعَةٌ ۡ فَاِذَا
بَرَزُوْا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ بَيَّتَ طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ غَيْرَ الَّذِىْ تَقُوْلُ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ يَكْتُبُ
مَا يُبَيِّتُوْنَ ۚ فَاَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللّٰهِ ۭ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ وَكِيْلًا ﴿٨١﴾
اَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُوْنَ الْقُرْاٰنَ ۭ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللّٰهِ لَوَجَدُوْا فِيْهِ
اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيْرًا ﴿٨٢﴾ وَاِذَا جَآءَهُمْ اَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْاَمْنِ اَوِ الْخَوْفِ اَذَاعُوْا
بِهٖ ۭ وَلَوْ رَدُّوْهُ اِلَى الرَّسُوْلِ وَاِلٰٓى اُولِي الْاَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِيْنَ
يَسْتَنْۢبِطُوْنَهٗ مِنْهُمْ ۭ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهٗ لَاتَّبَعْتُمُ الشَّيْطٰنَ
اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ﴿٨٣﴾ فَقَاتِلْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۚ لَا تُكَلَّفُ اِلَّا نَفْسَكَ وَحَرِّضِ
الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۚ عَسَى اللّٰهُ اَنْ يَّكُفَّ بَاْسَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا ۭ وَاللّٰهُ اَشَدُّ بَاْسًا
وَّاَشَدُّ تَنْكِيْلًا ﴿٨٤﴾ مَنْ يَّشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً يَّكُنْ لَّهٗ نَصِيْبٌ مِّنْهَا ۚ وَ
مَنْ يَّشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَّكُنْ لَّهٗ كِفْلٌ مِّنْهَا ۭ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰي كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ مُّقِيْتًا ﴿٨٥﴾ وَاِذَا حُيِّيْتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوْا بِاَحْسَنَ مِنْهَآ اَوْ رُدُّوْهَا ۭ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلٰي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيْبًا ﴿٨٦﴾ اَللّٰهُ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۭ لَيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ اِلٰى
يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ ۭ وَمَنْ اَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ حَدِيْثًا ﴿٨٧﴾ فَمَا لَكُمْ
فِي الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ فِئَتَيْنِ وَاللّٰهُ اَرْكَسَهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوْا ۭ اَتُرِيْدُوْنَ اَنْ تَهْدُوْا
مَنْ اَضَلَّ اللّٰهُ ۭ وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلِ اللّٰهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهٗ سَبِيْلًا ﴿٨٨﴾ وَدُّوْا لَوْ
تَكْفُرُوْنَ كَمَا كَفَرُوْا فَتَكُوْنُوْنَ سَوَاۗءً فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوْا مِنْهُمْ اَوْلِيَاۗءَ حَتّٰى
يُهَاجِرُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۭ فَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَخُذُوْهُمْ وَاقْتُلُوْهُمْ حَيْثُ
وَجَدْتُّمُوْهُمْ ۠ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوْا مِنْهُمْ وَلِيًّا وَّلَا نَصِيْرًا ﴿٨٩﴾ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ يَصِلُوْنَ

النصف

We have sent you, O Muḥammad, as a Messenger to mankind, and Allah's witness suffices for this. Whoever obeys the Messenger, in fact, obeys Allah and whoever turns away from him (is accountable for his deeds); anyhow We have not sent you to be keeper over them.[110] 79-80

In your presence, they say, "We are obedient to you," but when they leave you, some of them meet together secretly at night to plot against what you say; Allah writes down all their secret talks; so leave them alone and trust in Allah; Allah alone suffices for trust. Do they not ponder over the Qur'ān? Had it been from any other than Allah, surely there would have been many contradictions in it.[111] 81-82

Whenever these people hear any news concerning peace or danger, they make it known to all and sundry; instead of this, if they should convey it to the Messenger and to the responsible people of the Community, it would come to the knowledge of such people who among them are capable of sifting it and drawing right conclusions from it.[112] (Your weaknesses were such that) had it not been for Allah's grace and mercy towards you, all of you except a few, would have followed Satan. 83

O Prophet, fight in the way of Allah: you are accountable for none but your own person; you should, however, urge on the Believers to fight: it may be that Allah will soon break the strength of the disbelievers, for Allah is the strongest in might and His punishment is most severe. Whoever pleads a good cause, will get a share from it, and whoever pleads an evil cause also shall get a share from it;[113] for Allah keeps strict watch over everything. 84-85

And when anyone greets you in a respectful manner, greet him with a better salutation than his or at least return the same;[114] indeed Allah takes count of everything. Allah: there is no city but He. He will gather you all together on the Day of Resurrection, the coming of which is beyond all doubt: and whose word can be truer than Allah's?[115] 86-87

إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِّيثَاقٌ أَوْ جَاءُوكُمْ حَصِرَتْ صُدُورُهُمْ أَنْ
يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ يُقَاتِلُوا قَوْمَهُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقَاتَلُوكُمْ ۚ
فَإِنِ اعْتَزَلُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ وَأَلْقَوْا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَمَ ۙ فَمَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ
عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا ﴿90﴾ سَتَجِدُونَ آخَرِينَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا
قَوْمَهُمْ ۖ كُلَّمَا رُدُّوا إِلَى الْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكِسُوا فِيهَا ۚ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَعْتَزِلُوكُمْ وَيُلْقُوا
إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَمَ وَيَكُفُّوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَخُذُوهُمْ وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ ۚ
وَأُولَٰئِكُمْ جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانًا مُّبِينًا ﴿91﴾ وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَنْ
يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا خَطَأً ۚ وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَأً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ
وَدِيَةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَصَّدَّقُوا ۚ فَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ
لَّكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ ۖ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ
وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِّيثَاقٌ فَدِيَةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ ۖ
فَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ ۖ تَوْبَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿92﴾ وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا
وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴿93﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا إِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُوا وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ أَلْقَىٰ إِلَيْكُمُ
السَّلَمَ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا ۚ تَبْتَغُونَ عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۖ فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَغَانِمُ
كَثِيرَةٌ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ كُنْتُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلُ فَمَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَتَبَيَّنُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿94﴾ لَا يَسْتَوِي الْقَاعِدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُولِي
الضَّرَرِ وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۚ فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ

How is it with you that there are two opinions among you concerning the hypocrites,[116] whereas Allah has turned them back (to their former state) because of the evils they have earned?[117] Do you desire to show guidance to him whom Allah has let go astray? You cannot find a path for him whom Allah has turned away from the right path. They really wish that you should also become disbelievers, as they themselves are so that both may become alike. So you should not take friends from among them unless they migrate in the way of Allah; and if they do not migrate, then seize them wherever you find them and slay[118] them and do not take any of them as friends and helpers. However, those hypocrites are excepted who join a people who are allied to you by a treaty.[119] Likewise, those hypocrites are excepted who come to you and are averse to fighting either against you or against their own people. Had Allah willed, He would have given them power over you and they also would have fought against you; therefore if they leave you alone and desist from fighting against you and make overtures for peace to you, in that case Allah has left you no cause for aggression against them. You will also find another kind of hypocrites, who wish to be at peace with you and also at peace with their own people but who would plunge into mischief, whenever they got an opportunity for it. If such people do not desist from your enmity nor make overtures for peace nor desist from fighting against you, then seize them and slay them wherever you find them, for We have given you a clear authority to fight against them. 88-91

It does not behove a Believer to slay another Believer except by error,[120] and if one slays a Believer by error, he must set free one believing slave as expiation[121] and pay blood-money to the heirs[122] of the slain person unless they charitably forego it. But if the murdered Muslim belonged to a people who are at enmity with you, then the expiation shall be the freeing of one believing slave; and if the slain person belonged to a non-Muslim ally of yours, then the blood-money must be paid to his heirs[123] and a believing slave has to be set free. But if one could not afford a slave, then he must fast two consecutive months.[124] This is the way enjoined by Allah for repentance;[125] Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. As regards the one who kills a Believer wilfully, his recompense is Hell, wherein he shall live for ever. He has incurred Allah's wrath and His curse is 92-93

on him, and Allah has prepared a woeful torment for him.

94 O Believers, when you go to *Jihād* in the way of Allah, discern between friend and foe; and if one greets you with a salutation of peace, do not say to him abruptly, "You are not a believer."[126] If you seek worldly gain by this, Allah has abundant spoils for you. (Remember that) you yourselves were before this in the same condition; then Allah showed His grace on you;[127] therefore you should discern well, for Allah is fully aware of what you do.

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110. That is, "They themselves are responsible for their deeds and you will not be answerable for them. What you have been entrusted with, is to convey to them the commandments and instructions from God. And you have done that admirably well. Now it is not your obligation to force them to adopt the right way, and if they do not follow the Guidance they are receiving through you, you shall not be held responsible for their disobedience."

111. The main cause of the wrong attitude of the hypocrites and the people of weak faith, who had been warned in the foregoing verses, was that they had doubts that the Qur'ān was from Allah. They could not believe that it was being sent down by Allah to the Holy Prophet and that the Commandments contained in it were directly coming from Him. That is why they are being admonished to consider the Qur'ān by giving close attention to it, and to verify whether their doubts are genuine and whether it is from Allah or not. The Qur'ān itself bears witness to the truth that it is from none other than Allah, for none else, however wise and intelligent he might be, could have gone on delivering addresses under different circumstances about variant topics so as to form a connected, balanced and coherent Book at the end of twenty-three years and that too, without showing any contradiction whatever from the beginning to the end, and without there arising any need to revise or make any change in it.

112. During the period of excitement, rumours were on the air from many quarters. Sometimes baseless and exaggerated reports were received that caused alarm in Madīnah and its outskirts. Then some cunning enemy would send news that all was quiet in the enemy camp, merely to conceal some impending danger and to keep the Muslims off their guard. Only those people who loved excitement, took keen interest in such rumours; who did not take the conflict between Islam and un-Islam to be a serious matter; and who did not realize the grave consequences of indulging in such baseless rumours. Whenever they heard any rumour, they would spread it from place to place, without considering the great harm their pastime was causing.

In this verse, such people have been warned of the gravity of their offence and strictly admonished to refrain from spreading rumours. They have been told to report any news they heard to the responsible people and then keep silent about it.

113. Different people behave differently and with different results. Some urge on others to exert themselves for the cause of Allah and to exalt His Word and they get its reward. There are others who spread misunderstandings among the people about Allah's cause, discourage the Muslims and try to dissuade them from exalting the Word of Allah and thus incur punishment.

114. The Muslims were specially exhorted to be very civil and polite to the non-Muslims because at that time their relations were strained on account of the conflict between them. In that state of tension, they were forewarned to be on their guard against incivility and impoliteness. They were, therefore, taught to be equally civil and polite to them when they greeted them respectfully. Nay, they should be even more civil and polite than their opponents.

Harsh behaviour and harsh words do no good to anyone but they are specially unsuited to the work of those missionaries of Allah's Message, who have dedicated themselves to one day invite the world to the Truth and exerted themselves to reform the ways of the people. Such ill behaviour may satisfy one's vanity, but it does great harm to one's mission.

115. That is, "The misbehaviour of the unbelievers, atheists, polytheists and the like can do no damage to the Godhead of Allah, for they cannot alter the fact that He is the One and All-Powerful Sovereign, and that, one day He will assemble together all human beings and deal with them in accordance with their deeds and none will be able to escape from His retribution. Therefore, Allah does not stand in need of anyone to defend Him against His rebels by showing incivility and impoliteness to them.

That is the bearing of this verse on the preceding verse. But this verse also serves as an appendix to the passage that began from verse 60. In that case it means: Let any body follow any way he chooses and work in any way he likes in this world but he should not forget that one Day everyone shall have to go in the presence of Allah Who is the sole Sovereign. Then everyone shall see the result of his actions and deeds.

116. This passage deals with the problem of those hypocritical Muslims who had accepted Islam in Makkah and other parts of Arabia but had not emigrated to Madinah. They lived as before with their people, and took more or less a practical part in all their hostile activities against Islam and the Muslims. They had become a very difficult problem for the Muslims who did not know how to deal with them. Some Muslims were of the opinion that they were after all

"Muslims" because they recited the *kalimah* (the article of the Muslims' Faith), offered the *Ṣalāt*, observed the Fast and recited the Qur'ān. Then how could they be dealt with like the disbelievers? Allah in this passage has removed that difference of opinion from among the Muslims and told them how to deal with them.

At this place one should clearly understand why those Muslims who did not emigrate to Madīnah were declared to be hypocrites; otherwise one might not be able to interpret correctly this passage and the like passages of the Qur'ān. The fact of the matter is that when the Holy Prophet migrated to Madīnah and conditions were created there for the fulfilment of the requirements of Islam, a general order was given that all those Muslims who were oppressed in any place and in any tribe or clan and could not freely carry out their Islamic obligations, should migrate to Madīnah, "the Abode of Islam." As a result, all those who could emigrate but did not do so because they loved their homes, their relatives and their interests more than Islam, were declared to be hypocrites. Only such of those as were really being prevented by impediments were declared to be helpless in verse 97 of this Sūrah.

It is obvious that the Muslims living in the "abode of unbelief" may be declared hypocrites for not migrating only if a general invitation is extended to them by the people living in "the Abode of Islam", or at least the doors of" the Abode of Islam" are kept open for them. In such a case all those Muslims who may be doing nothing to change "the abode of unbelief" into "the Abode of Islam", nor emigrate to "the Abode of Islam", even if they could, would be declared hypocrites.

117. Allah turned the hypocrites back to their former unbelief because they followed a double-faced policy and were time-servers. As they preferred the life of this world to that of the Hereafter, they had entered the fold of Islam with some mental reservations. They were not prepared to sacrifice those interests which came into conflict with the requirements of the Faith and they did not have that firm belief in the Hereafter which makes one sacrifice with perfect peace of mind this world for the sake of the Next World. It has thus become obvious that the line of demarcation was so clearcut that there ought not to have been two opinions about hypocrisy.

118. Here the Muslims have been asked to catch hold of those hypocrites who belonged to the belligerent disbelievers and were actually engaged in hostile activities against the Islamic State.

119. The exception is only concerning the first part of the Command. Though the blood of such a hypocrite is lawful, he is not to be pursued and killed,

if he has sought asylum in the territory of a non-Muslim State, which is an ally to the Islamic State. This is not because of the sanctity of the blood of the hypocrite but because of the sanctity of the treaty.

120. This does not refer to the category of the above-mentioned hypocrites whose blood has been made lawful, but to the sincere Muslims who lived either in "the Abode of Islam", or in "the war zone" or "the abode of unbelief", against whom there was no proof that they had taken part in the hostile activities of the enemies of Islam: such a warning was necessary because there were many people who had accepted Islam sincerely but were still forced by circumstances to live among the foes of Islam; and there had been cases when some of them were accidentally killed by their Muslim brethren during an attack on an enemy clan. Therefore, Allah has enjoined what a Muslim, who kills a Muslim by mis-chance, must do to expiate such an accidental sin.

121. As the slain person was a Believer, a believing slave is to be set free as expiation for his accidental murder.

122. The Holy Prophet prescribed one hundred camels or two hundred cows or two thousand goats as blood-money to be paid to the survivors of the slain man. If one desired to pay it in any other form, he would have to calculate it in terms of the market price of these animals. For instance, the blood-money paid in cash during the time of the Holy Prophet was eight hundred gold *dināṙs* or eight thousand silver *dirhams*. During his Caliphate, Ḥaḍrat 'Umar declared, "Now that the price of a camel has gone up, one thousand *dināṙs* or twelve thousand *dirhams* should be paid as blood-money." It should, however, be noted that the blood-money prescribed here is not for a wilful murder but for an accidental one.

123. In brief, the following are the Commandments contained in v. 92:

If the slain person is an inhabitant of "the Abode of Islam," his murderer shall have to pay blood-money as compensation and also to set free a slave to earn his forgiveness from God.

And if he is an inhabitant of a "war zone", the murderer shall have only to set free a slave and not to pay any blood-money.

And if he belongs to an "abode of unbelief" which is an ally of the Islamic State, the murderer shall have to set free a slave and also have to pay blood-money equal to the amount of the blood-money of a non-Muslim victim as contained in the treaty.

124. These fasts must be consecutive without a single day's break; if there is a single break, except if it be in accordance with the Law, one shall have to

[Contd on p. 366

الْمُجٰهِدِيْنَ بِاَمْوَالِهِمْ وَ اَنْفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْقٰعِدِيْنَ دَرَجَةً ؕ وَ كُلًّا وَّعَدَ اللّٰهُ
الْحُسْنٰى ؕ وَ فَضَّلَ اللّٰهُ الْمُجٰهِدِيْنَ عَلَى الْقٰعِدِيْنَ اَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿95﴾ دَرَجٰتٍ
مِّنْهُ وَ مَغْفِرَةً وَّ رَحْمَةً ؕ وَ كَانَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿96﴾ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ تَوَفّٰىهُمُ
الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِيْٓ اَنْفُسِهِمْ قَالُوْا فِيْمَ كُنْتُمْ ؕ قَالُوْا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِيْنَ فِي
الْاَرْضِ ؕ قَالُوْٓا اَلَمْ تَكُنْ اَرْضُ اللّٰهِ وَاسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوْا فِيْهَا ؕ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ مَاْوٰىهُمْ
جَهَنَّمُ ؕ وَ سَآءَتْ مَصِيْرًا ﴿97﴾ اِلَّا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِيْنَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَ النِّسَآءِ وَ الْوِلْدَانِ
لَا يَسْتَطِيْعُوْنَ حِيْلَةً وَّ لَا يَهْتَدُوْنَ سَبِيْلًا ﴿98﴾ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ عَسَى اللّٰهُ اَنْ
يَّعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ ؕ وَ كَانَ اللّٰهُ عَفُوًّا غَفُوْرًا ﴿99﴾ وَ مَنْ يُّهَاجِرْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ
يَجِدْ فِي الْاَرْضِ مُرٰغَمًا كَثِيْرًا وَّ سَعَةً ؕ وَ مَنْ يَّخْرُجْ مِنْۢ بَيْتِهٖ مُهَاجِرًا
اِلَى اللّٰهِ وَ رَسُوْلِهٖ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ اَجْرُهٗ عَلَى اللّٰهِ ؕ وَ
كَانَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿100﴾ وَ اِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْاَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ
جُنَاحٌ اَنْ تَقْصُرُوْا مِنَ الصَّلٰوةِ ۖ اِنْ خِفْتُمْ اَنْ يَّفْتِنَكُمُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا ؕ اِنَّ
الْكٰفِرِيْنَ كَانُوْا لَكُمْ عَدُوًّا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿101﴾ وَ اِذَا كُنْتَ فِيْهِمْ فَاَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ الصَّلٰوةَ
فَلْتَقُمْ طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ مَّعَكَ وَلْيَاْخُذُوْٓا اَسْلِحَتَهُمْ ۫ فَاِذَا سَجَدُوْا فَلْيَكُوْنُوْا
مِنْ وَّرَآئِكُمْ ۪ وَلْتَاْتِ طَآئِفَةٌ اُخْرٰى لَمْ يُصَلُّوْا فَلْيُصَلُّوْا مَعَكَ وَلْيَاْخُذُوْا
حِذْرَهُمْ وَ اَسْلِحَتَهُمْ ؕ وَدَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لَوْ تَغْفُلُوْنَ عَنْ اَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَ
اَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيْلُوْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَّيْلَةً وَّاحِدَةً ؕ وَ لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ اِنْ كَانَ
بِكُمْ اَذًى مِّنْ مَّطَرٍ اَوْ كُنْتُمْ مَّرْضٰٓى اَنْ تَضَعُوْٓا اَسْلِحَتَكُمْ ۚ وَ خُذُوْا حِذْرَكُمْ ؕ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ اَعَدَّ لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ عَذَابًا مُّهِيْنًا ﴿102﴾ فَاِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلٰوةَ فَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ

Those people from among the Muslims who stay at home without any genuine excuse are not equal in rank with those who exert their utmost with their lives and wealth for the cause of Allah. For Allah has assigned a higher rank to those who exert their utmost with their lives and wealth than those who stay at home. Though Allah has promised a good reward for all, he has a far richer reward for those who fight for Him than for those who stay at home:[128] they have high ranks, forgiveness and mercy from Allah, for Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. 95-96

When the angels seized the souls of those who were doing wrong to their own souls[129] they asked them, "What was the matter with you?" They answered, "We were oppressed in the land." The angels replied, "Was not Allah's earth spacious for you to emigrate in it?"[130] Hell is the abode of such people and it is a very evil abode indeed. As regards those men, women and children who are really helpless and lack the means of migration and find no way out, Allah may pardon them, for Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing. The one who emigrates in the way of Allah, will find in the land enough room for refuge and abundant resources for livelihood. As regards the one, who leaves his home to migrate towards Allah and His Messenger and death overtakes him on the way, Allah has taken upon Himself to give him his due reward, for Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.[131] 97-100

When you go on a journey, there is no harm, if you shorten your *Ṣalāt*,[132] (especially) when you fear that the disbelievers might harass you,[133] for the disbelievers are openly bent upon enmity against you. 101

And when you, O Prophet, are among the Muslims and are going to lead them in *Ṣalāt*[134] (in a state of war), let a party of them stand behind you,[135] carrying their weapons with them. When they have made their prostrations, they should fall back and let another party of them, who have not yet offered the *Ṣalāt*, say it with you and they, too, should be on their guard and keep their weapons with them.[136] For the disbelievers are always on the look-out for a chance to find you neglectful of your weapons and your baggage so that they may swoop down upon you with a surprise attack. If, however, you feel some inconvenience on account of rain, or if you are ill, there is no harm if you put aside your weapons, but you should still be on 102

your guard. Rest assured that Allah has prepared a disgraceful torment for the disbelievers.[137]

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begin the prescribed fasting anew for two full months.

125. That is, "The freeing of a slave or the payment of blood-money or the fasting for two consecutive months is not a penalty but is repentance and *kaffārah* (cover) for the offence. The difference between the two is that in the case of penalty, there is no feeling of self-reproach, compunction, contrition and self-reform, but there is a feeling of disgust and aversion, and it leaves disgust and bitterness behind it. That is why Allah enjoins *kaffārah* and repentance so that the offender may be able to purify his soul by means of good deeds, devotion and fulfilment of the rights, and turn to Allah through self-reproach and compunction. In this way the sinner will not only atone for his present sin but will also refrain in future from such errors.

Kaffārah literally means a cover; a good deed that is performed as *kaffārah* for a sin, so to say, covers it just as a white-wash covers a blot on a wall.

126. In the early days of Islam, *Assalâm-u-'alaikum* (peace be upon you) was a symbol of recognition for Muslims. When a Muslim met another Muslim, he greeted him with this salutation, as if to say, "I belong to your own community; I am your friend and well-wisher. I have nothing but peace and security for you; so you should not show enmity towards me nor fear enmity and harm from me." It was like a "pass-word" used in the army while passing through a line of guards at night so as to discern between friends and foes.

The importance of the salutation of peace as a symbol of recognition was specially great at that time because there was no apparent mark of distinction between a Muslim Arab and a non-Muslim Arab, as they wore the same kind of dress and spoke the same language. Still a difficulty arose when the Muslims attacked some clan and a local Muslim also became the target of attack. Then he would cry out, *Assalām-u-'alaikum* or *Lā Ilāha Illallah* (there is no god but Allah). But the attacking Muslims would suspect him to be a disbeliever who was using the password as a trick merely to save his life. They would, therefore, often kill him and take possession of his belongings as spoils. Although the Holy Prophet would severely admonish the offenders on such occasions, yet there was a recurrence of such incidents. Then Allah solved the difficulty in this verse, which means, "You have no right to judge cursorily that the man, who is declaring himself to be a Muslim, is telling a lie merely to save his life. It is equally possible that he may be speaking the truth, or telling a lie, and one cannot know the reality without making a thorough investigation. Thus, while there is a chance of letting

off a disbeliever by accepting his salutations of peace as genuine, there is also the more horrible chance of killing an innocent Believer. In any case, it is far better to let off a disbeliever by mistake than to kill a Believer by error."

127. That is, "There was a time when you yourselves were scattered as individuals among different clans of disbelievers. You were then hiding your Islam for fear of oppression and persecution and you could offer no other proof of your Faith except by an oral expression. Now it is the bounty of Allah that you are enjoying community life and are able to raise the banner of Islam against the disbelievers. The right way of showing gratitude to Allah for this bounty is to show kindness and leniency to those Muslims who are still in the same state in which you were before this."

128. In this passage, the relative status of true Muslims has been assigned according as they behave when they are asked to go to *Jihād* on a voluntary basis, when the leader of the Islamic forces does not require the whole Muslim force. Those who offer themselves and their wealth and go to *Jihād* have been assigned a higher rank than those who stay at home, even though the latter might have been engaged in other good works; moreover, there is, for the former a 'promise of a good reward.' As regards those who stay at home, when they are ordered to go to *Jihād*, by making excuses or even those who shirk *Jihād*, when a general order is given for *Jihād* and *Jihād* becomes an obligatory duty — in these two cases those who are engaged in other works and do not go to *Jihād* are hypocrites and are not entitled to the benefit of the 'promise of a good reward' except that they stay behind for any genuine excuse.

129. "Those who were doing wrong to their own souls" were the people who had accepted Islam but were still living among their own clans, which had not yet embraced Islam, without any genuine excuse or compulsion. They were doing wrong to their own selves by living in a state of semi-Islam, although "the Abode of Islam" had come into existence where they could migrate and live the full life of a Muslim. They were quite content to live such a wretched life of semi-unbelief, according to their faith because they preferred their comforts, their families, their properties and their interests to their Faith. That is why their excuse, "We were weak and helpless in the land", has not been accepted. (Please also see E.N. 116).

130. That is, "Why did you continue to live in a place which was oppressed by the rebels against Allah and where it was not possible to live in accordance with the Law of Allah? And why did you not migrate to a place where you could follow the Divine Law without any hindrance?"

131. As regards "migration in the way of Allah", it is an obligation with two exceptions: one may remain there to struggle for the establishment of Islam

and to change the system of life based on unbelief into the system of Islam, just as the Prophets and their immediate followers did in the initial stages of their mission; or one may remain there in a state of great disgust and repugnance as long as one is unable to find any way out of it. With the exception of the above two cases, it will be a life of continuous sin to live in an "abode of unbelief". The excuse that "We could not find any 'Abode of Islam' for migration" shall not be accepted and will be met with the rebuff: "If there was no 'Abode of Islam', was there no forest or mountain where you could live on the leaves of trees and the milk of goats in order to escape from submission to the laws of unbelief?"

In this connection, a misunderstanding about the Tradition, "No migration after the conquest of Makkah", may also be removed. This was not a permanent command concerning migration but only a temporary instruction that suited the changed conditions of Arabia after the conquest of Makkah. As long as the major portion of Arabia was the "abode of unbelief", the Muslims were enjoined to migrate to Madīnah, which was the only "Abode of Islam" at the time. But when almost all the parts of Arabia came under Islam, the Holy Prophet so to say, merely cancelled the first command under which migration was compulsory, saying, "There is no more (compulsory) migration (to Madinah) after the conquest of Makkah." The Tradition was never meant to be a prohibitory command for all the Muslims of the world for all times to come up to the Last Day.

132. The shortening of the obligatory part of the *Ṣalat* during a journey in peace time is, 'to reduce four *rak'ats* to two *rak'ats*" but there is no prescribed limit to the reduction during actual fighting. The *Ṣalāt* must be offered any-how in any form as the circumstances on the occasion permit. If it is possible to offer the *Ṣalāt* in congregation, it should be offered in congregation; otherwise the soldiers should say it individually. If it is not possible to turn the face to the *qiblah*, it may be offered facing any other direction. If it is not possible to remain stationary for the *Ṣalāt*, it may be offered while riding or walking. If it is not possible to bend down or prostrate, one should do so symbolically. If, during the *Ṣalāt*, it becomes necessary to move from that place, one may continue the Prayer even during the movement. There is no harm in offering the *Ṣalāt*, even if one's clothes become stained with blood. And even if in spite of all these concessions, it is not possible to offer it at all, it may then be reluctantly postponed, as was done during the course of the "Battle of the Trench."

There is a difference of opinion as to whether the obligatory parts (*fara'id*) only are to be offered in a journey or those parts (*sunnats*) also that were practised by the Holy Prophet in addition to the former. When on a journey the Holy Prophet used to offer without fail two *rak'ats* in addition to the obligatory *rak'ats* of *Ṣalat-ul-Fajr* (Morning Prayers) and three *rak'ats* of *witr* with *Ṣalāt-ul-'Isha'*

(Night Prayer). At other times he only offered the obligatory parts; there is no proof of his offering the *sunnat* parts. He, however, used to offer "additional prayers" (*nawāfil*), whenever he got time for these even while he was riding. That is why Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar prohibited the people from offering the *sunnats* during a journey except with the Morning Prayer. But the majority of the scholars leave it to the individual's option to offer or not to offer the *sunnats* on a journey. The Ḥanafīs are of the opinion that it is better to leave them during the actual journey but one must offer them at a halting place, if one can get the necessary peace of mind.

As regards the nature of the journey in which the *Ṣalat* may be shortened, some scholars (Ibn 'Umar, Ibn Mas'ud and 'Atā) have imposed the condition that it should be in the way of Allah, *e.g.*, for *Jihād, Ḥajj, 'Umrah*, or in quest of knowledge, etc. Imām Shāfi'ī and Imām Aḥmad are of the opinion that the journey should be for some lawful purpose; otherwise one has no right of enjoying the concession of reduction in *Ṣalāt*. The Ḥanafīs are of the opinion that the *Ṣalāt* may be shortened during any kind of journey, irrespective of the purpose for which it is undertaken. As regards the nature of the journey, it may merit reward or punishment by itself, but it does not affect the concession of reduction in *Ṣalāt*.

Some of the Imāms have interpreted words "there is no harm" to mean that "reduction in the Prayer" is not obligatory but merely optional. One may make use of the permission and shorten his *Ṣalāt* or may not. Imam Shafi'ī holds the same view, though he considers it better to shorten it. He is of the opinion that one who does not make use of the "reduction", gives up the higher thing and adopts a lower thing. Imām Aḥmad is of the opinion that although "reduction" is not obligatory, yet it is improper not to make use of the concession. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah considers "reduction" obligatory and there is also a tradition from Imām Mālik to the same effect. All the traditions from the Holy Prophet show that in his journeys he always shortened his *Ṣalāt* and there is no authentic Tradition to show that he ever offered four *rak'ats* on a journey. Ibn 'Umar says, "During the journeys I accompanied the Holy Prophet, Abū Bakr, 'Umar or '*Uthmān* (may Allah be pleased with them all), and I witnessed that they always shortened their *Ṣalāt* and never offered four *rak'ats*." The same view is also supported by authentic traditions from Ibn 'Abbas and several other Companions.

Once during *Ḥajj*, Ḥaḍrat 'Uthman performed four *rak'ats* while he was leading the *Ṣalat* at Mīnā and the Companions objected to it. He satisfied them, saying, "I have taken a wife from Makkah and I have heard from the Holy Prophet that whoever marries at a place becomes a citizen of that place. Therefore I have not shortened my prayer."

There are, however, two traditions against this from Ḥaḍrat 'A'ishah which show that it is equally right to make a "reduction" in the *Ṣalāt* or to say it in full. But these traditions are weak in authenticity and contrary to her own practice, for she herself practised "reduction".

In this connection, it may also be noted that sometimes one feels oneself to be "on a journey" as well as "at home" when one may shorten the *Ṣalāt* or offer it in full at one and the same halting place according to the circumstances. Most probably Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah referred to such a state, saying: "When on a journey, the Holy Prophet sometimes shortened his *Ṣalāt* and sometimes offered it in full."

As regards the words, "There is no harm if you shorten your Prayer", it is not correct to conclude that the "Command" is optional. The same words have been used in connection with running between Safā and Marwā on the occasion of *Ḥajj*, in verse 158 of Al-Baqarah, although this is an essential part of *Ḥajj*. As a matter of fact, these words have been used in both the places to allay the fear that shortening of the Prayer or running between Safā and Marwā might entail a sin or lessen one's rewards.

As regards the length of the journey, the Zahirites are of the opinion that "reduction" may be made in any journey irrespective of the distance. According to Imām Mālik, the minimum distance of the journey should be 48 miles, or its duration should be at least one day and one night. Ḥaḍrat Ibn 'Abbās and Imām Aḥmad are also of the same opinion and a saying of Imām Shafi'ī also supports the same. But the minimum distance for "reduction" according to Ḥaḍrat Anas is 15 miles, while Imām Auzā'ī and Imām Zuhri follow the opinion of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar that one day's journey suffices for "reduction". According to Ḥaḍrat Ḥasan Baṣri and Imām Abū Yūsuf, the minimum journey of two days entitles one to shorten one's *Ṣalāt*. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah is of the opinion that "reduction" may be made in a journey of a minimum distance of 54 miles. The same is the opinion of Ibn 'Umar, Ibn Mas'ūd and Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān (may Allah be pleased with them all).

Opinions differ regarding the "reduction" in a halt during the course of a journey. Imām Aḥmad is of the opinion that if one intends to halt at a place for four days, one will have to offer the Prayer in full. According to Imām Mālik and Imām Shafe'i, "reduction" is not lawful at a place where one intends to halt for more than four days. Imām Auzā'ī extends it to 13 days and Imām Abū Ḥanīfah to 15 days or more and enjoins offering of the full Prayer during such a halt. But there is no explicit command of the Holy Prophet about this. However, there is a consensus of opinion that if one is forced by circumstances to halt at a place but intends to leave it for home at any time, one may go on practising "reduction" for an indefinite period of time. There are instances when some Companions practised "reduction" continuously even for two years for the same reason. Imam Aḥmad

bin Ḥanbal allows a prisoner to make "reduction" during the whole term of his imprisonment.

133. The Zāhirites and the Khārijites interpret this sentence to mean that reduction in the *Ṣalat* may be made only during state of war and that reduction in a journey during peace time is against the Qur'ān. But we learn from an authentic Tradition that once when Ḥaḍrat 'Umar presented the same objection before the Holy Prophet, he answered, "The concession of 'reduction' is a bounty from Allah; therefore, enjoy it". This is a well known fact that the Holy Prophet availed of the concession in every journey both during war time and during peace time.

Another tradition from Ibn 'Abbās makes the position clear, saying, "The Holy Prophet went to Makkah from Madinah and there was no fear of anyone except of God but he reduced four *rak'ats* of the *Salat* to two *rak'ats*". That is the reason why the word "especially" has been added in brackets in the translation.

134. From the words, "And when you, O Prophet, are among the Muslims", Imām Abū Yūsuf and Ḥasan bin Ziyād have concluded that the commandment about the "*Ṣalāt* of Fear" was meant to be in force only during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. But there are many instances in the Qur'ān that a commandment has been addressed to the Holy Prophet and the same also holds good for his successors after him. Therefore, there is no reason why the commandment about the "*Ṣalat* of Fear" be restricted to the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. Then there are instances that many of the great Companions offered the "*Ṣalat* of Fear" after his death and no difference of opinion in this regard has been reported from any Companion.

135. This Commandment about the "*Ṣalāt* of Fear" applies to that state when there is a threat of imminent attack from the enemy but no actual fighting is going on. As regards the state of actual fighting, according to the Ḥanafīs the *Ṣalāt* will be postponed to a later time, and according to Imām Mālik and Imām Thauri, if it is not possible to bow and to prostrate, it should be performed by symbolic gestures. According to Imām Shāfi'ī, one may even during the "*Ṣalāt* of Fear", remain engaged a little in the conflict, if need be.

We learn from authentic Traditions that the Holy Prophet postponed four consecutive *Ṣalāts* during the Battle of the Trench, and afterwards when he got respite, he performed these in the respective order although the Commandment about the "*Ṣalat* of Fear" had been sent down before this.

136. The form of the "*Ṣalat* of Fear" mainly depends upon the conditions of war. As the Holy Prophet led it in various ways, according to the different conditions, the Muslim leader of the time has the option of adopting any of those ways, according as it suits a certain occasion.

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قِيٰمًا وَّ قُعُوْدًا وَّ عَلٰى جُنُوْبِكُمْ ۚ فَاِذَا اطْمَاْنَنْتُمْ فَاَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ ۚ اِنَّ
الصَّلٰوةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ كِتٰبًا مَّوْقُوْتًا ﴿103﴾ وَلَا تَهِنُوْا فِى ابْتِغَآءِ الْقَوْمِ ؕ
اِنْ تَكُوْنُوْا تَاْلَمُوْنَ فَاِنَّهُمْ يَاْلَمُوْنَ كَمَا تَاْلَمُوْنَ ۚ وَتَرْجُوْنَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ مَا
لَا يَرْجُوْنَ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ﴿104﴾ اِنَّاۤ اَنْزَلْنَاۤ اِلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ
لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِمَاۤ اَرٰىكَ اللّٰهُ ؕ وَلَا تَكُنْ لِّلْخَآئِنِيْنَ خَصِيْمًا ﴿105﴾ وَّاسْتَغْفِرِ
اللّٰهَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿106﴾ وَلَا تُجَادِلْ عَنِ الَّذِيْنَ يَخْتَانُوْنَ
اَنْفُسَهُمْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ خَوَّانًا اَثِيْمًا ﴿107﴾ يَّسْتَخْفُوْنَ مِنَ
النَّاسِ وَلَا يَسْتَخْفُوْنَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ وَهُوَ مَعَهُمْ اِذْ يُبَيِّتُوْنَ مَا لَا يَرْضٰى
مِنَ الْقَوْلِ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ مُحِيْطًا ﴿108﴾ هٰۤاَنْتُمْ هٰۤؤُلَآءِ جٰدَلْتُمْ
عَنْهُمْ فِى الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۫ فَمَنْ يُّجَادِلُ اللّٰهَ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ اَمْ
مَّنْ يَّكُوْنُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيْلًا ﴿109﴾ وَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ سُوْٓءًا اَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهٗ ثُمَّ
يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللّٰهَ يَجِدِ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿110﴾ وَمَنْ يَّكْسِبْ اِثْمًا فَاِنَّمَا يَكْسِبُهٗ
عَلٰى نَفْسِهٖ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ﴿111﴾ وَمَنْ يَّكْسِبْ خَطِيْٓئَةً اَوْ اِثْمًا ثُمَّ
يَرْمِ بِهٖ بَرِيْٓـًٔا فَقَدِ احْتَمَلَ بُهْتَانًا وَّاِثْمًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿112﴾ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ
عَلَيْكَ وَرَحْمَتُهٗ لَهَمَّتْ طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ اَنْ يُّضِلُّوْكَ ؕ وَمَا يُضِلُّوْنَ اِلَّاۤ
اَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَضُرُّوْنَكَ مِنْ شَىْءٍ ؕ وَاَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُنْ تَعْلَمُ ؕ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيْمًا ﴿113﴾ لَا خَيْرَ
فِىْ كَثِيْرٍ مِّنْ نَّجْوٰىهُمْ اِلَّا مَنْ اَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ اَوْ مَعْرُوْفٍ اَوْ اِصْلَاحٍ
بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّفْعَلْ ذٰلِكَ ابْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللّٰهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيْهِ

When you have finished your Prayer, you should remember Allah, whether you are standing or sitting or reclining: then, as soon as you are secure, say your Ṣalāt in full. Indeed, the Ṣalāt is a prescribed duty that should be performed at appointed times by the Believers. 103

Show no weakness in pursuing these people:[138] if you are suffering hardship, they, too, are suffering hardship as you are suffering. Moreover, you are expecting to receive from Allah that which they are not expecting.[139] Allah knows everything and is All-Wise. 104

O Prophet,[140] We have sent this Book to you with the Truth so that you may judge between people in accordance with the right way which Allah has shown you. So do not plead for the dishonest people; implore Allah's forgiveness: for Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate. You should not plead for those who are dishonest to themselves:[141] Allah does not like the one who is persistently dishonest and sinful. They might hide their evil deeds from the people but they cannot hide these from Allah: He is with them even when they hold at night such secret consultations as do not please Him; Allah encompasses all that they are doing. Well, you have argued on their behalf in this worldly life but who will argue their case with Allah on the Day of Resurrection? Or who will be their defender there? If one does a sinful thing or wrongs himself in any way and afterwards implores Allah's forgiveness, he will find Allah Forgiving and Compassionate. But if one earns some evil (and does not repent), this earning of his will bring due punishment on him, for Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. But he who commits an error or a sin, and then lays the blame for it on an innocent person, surely burdens himself with the guilt of calumny and a heinous sin. 105-112

O Prophet, had not Allah's grace been with you, and had not His mercy safeguarded you from their mischief, a party from among them had decided to involve you in misunderstanding though they were involving no one but themselves in misunderstanding and could have done you no harm.[142] Allah has sent down the Book and the Wisdom to you and taught what you did not know; great indeed is His 113

bounty to you.

Contd. from p. 371]

One way is that one section of the army should offer the *Ṣalāt* with the leader and the other should remain engaged in fighting against the enemy. After the performance of one *rak'at* and after bringing the prayer to an end formally that section should fall back to the fighting line and the second section should perform the second *rak'at* with the *Imām*. Thus, the leader will perform two *rak 'ats* while the sections will perform one *rak'at* each.

The second way is that one section should perform one *rak'at* with the Imam and fall back; then the second section should offer one *rak'at* with the Imām and fall back; then each section should come back, turn by turn, and complete the second (*i.e.* the missed) *rak'at* individually. In this way each section will perform the first *rak'at* behind the Imām and the second individually.

The third way is that one section of the army should perform two *rak'ats* with the Imām and after salutation should fall back to the fighting line. Then the second section should join in the third *rak'at* and complete the Prayer with the Imam. Thus, the Imām will perform four *rak'ats* and each section of the army two *rak'ats* each.

The fourth way is that one section should perform one *rak'at* behind the Imām and when the Imām stands up for the second *rak'at* the followers should complete the second *rak'at* by themselves and then join the ranks. As regards the Imām, he should prolong his second *rak'at* so that the other section may join him and perform their first *rak'at* behind him and complete their second *rak'at* by themselves.

The first way has been related by Ibn 'Abbas, Jabir bin 'Abdullah and Mujahid, and the second by 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud and the Hanafis give preference to this. The third way has been related by Ḥasan Baṣrī from Abu Bakrah and the fourth by Sahl bin Abī Hathmah and accepted by Imām Shafi'ī and Imām Mālik with a little modification.

There are other ways of offering the "*Ṣalāt* of Fear" details of which may be had from any of the numerous books of the Islamic Law and Regulations.

137. The Muslims have been reassured that Allah Himself will deal severely with the disbelievers who are opposing the Truth with their false machinations and will bring ignominy to them. The precautionary measures that are being enjoined are merely from the practical point of view to teach them that they should, in their turn, exert their utmost and leave the result to Allah, in Whose hands really lies victory or defeat.

138. "These people": the disbelievers who were opposing the Islamic mission and doing their utmost to prevent the establishment of the Islamic system of life.

139. That is, "It is really strange that the believers should not bear bravely as many hardships for the sake of Truth as the disbelievers were bearing for falsehood, though the latter have no other object than this world and its transitory benefits, whereas the believers have the highest object of pleasing the Lord of the heavens and the earth and expect to get everlasting rewards from Him."

140. In vv. 105-115, very important issues concerning an event that occurred at that time have been discussed.

There was in the Banī Zafar clan of the Ansar, a man known as Ta'mah or Bashir bin-Ubairiq. He stole the armour of another Ansari and hid it in the house of a Jew. When an investigation started into the theft, the owner of the armour placed the matter before the Holy Prophet and told him that he suspected Ta'mah of the theft. But the accused and his relatives and many other people of the Bani Zafar clan conspired and laid the guilt at the door of the Jew, who asserted that he was innocent of the thing. But Ta'mah's people went on pleading his case vehemently. They argued: "The statement of the Jew who is an enemy of the Truth and who disbelieves in Allah and His Messenger cannot be trusted; whereas we are Muslims, and, therefore, should be trusted." The Holy Prophet was naturally influenced by the seeming correctness of the argument and was about to acquit Ta'mah and give a warning to the plaintiff for bringing a false charge against a Muslim, and decide the case against the Jew, when this Revelation came and disclosed the reality of the matter.

It is true that even if the Holy Prophet had, as a judge, decided the case in the light of the evidence produced before him, he would not have incurred any blame, for judges have to give their decision according to the evidence that is presented before them and sometimes people do succeed in getting wrong judgements in their favour by misrepresentation. But the matter had another side: if the Holy Prophet had decided the case against the Jew at that time, when a bitter conflict was raging between Islam and *kufr*, the enemies of Islam would have got a strong moral weapon against him, nay, against the Islamic Community and the Islamic Mission. They would have carried on a bitter propaganda against Islam, saying, "There is no justice among the Muslims; they practise prejudices and partisanship inspite of the fact that they preach against them as has been shown by this decision against the Jew". That is why, Allah directly intervened in the case to save them from this danger.

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أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٤﴾ وَمَنْ يُّشَاقِقِ الرَّسُوْلَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدٰى وَ
يَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيْلِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ نُوَلِّهٖ مَا تَوَلّٰى وَنُصْلِهٖ جَهَنَّمَ ؕ وَ سَآءَتْ
مَصِيْرًا ﴿١١٥﴾ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ اَنْ يُّشْرَكَ بِهٖ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُوْنَ ذٰلِكَ لِمَنْ
يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَمَنْ يُّشْرِكْ بِاللّٰهِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلٰلًۢا بَعِيْدًا ﴿١١٦﴾ اِنْ يَّدْعُوْنَ مِنْ
دُوْنِهٖۤ اِلَّاۤ اِنٰثًا ۚ وَاِنْ يَّدْعُوْنَ اِلَّا شَيْطٰنًا مَّرِيْدًا ﴿١١٧﴾ لَّعَنَهُ اللّٰهُ ؘ وَقَالَ
لَاَتَّخِذَنَّ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ نَصِيْبًا مَّفْرُوْضًا ﴿١١٨﴾ وَّلَاُضِلَّنَّهُمْ وَلَاُمَنِّيَنَّهُمْ وَلَاٰمُرَنَّهُمْ
فَلَيُبَتِّكُنَّ اٰذَانَ الْاَنْعَامِ وَلَاٰمُرَنَّهُمْ فَلَيُغَيِّرُنَّ خَلْقَ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّتَّخِذِ
الشَّيْطٰنَ وَلِيًّا مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿١١٩﴾ يَعِدُهُمْ وَ
يُمَنِّيْهِمْ ؕ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ اِلَّا غُرُوْرًا ﴿١٢٠﴾ اُولٰٓئِكَ مَاْوٰىهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۫ وَلَا
يَجِدُوْنَ عَنْهَا مَحِيْصًا ﴿١٢١﴾ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ
جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَاۤ اَبَدًا ؕ وَعْدَ اللّٰهِ حَقًّا ؕ وَ
مَنْ اَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ قِيْلًا ﴿١٢٢﴾ لَيْسَ بِاَمَانِيِّكُمْ وَلَاۤ اَمَانِيِّ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ ؕ
مَنْ يَّعْمَلْ سُوْٓءًا يُّجْزَ بِهٖ ۙ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهٗ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلِيًّا وَّلَا نَصِيْرًا ﴿١٢٣﴾
وَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ اَوْ اُنْثٰى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ
يَدْخُلُوْنَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُوْنَ نَقِيْرًا ﴿١٢٤﴾ وَمَنْ اَحْسَنُ دِيْنًا مِّمَّنْ اَسْلَمَ
وَجْهَهٗ لِلّٰهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَّاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ حَنِيْفًا ؕ وَاتَّخَذَ اللّٰهُ
اِبْرٰهِيْمَ خَلِيْلًا ﴿١٢٥﴾ وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ
بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيْطًا ﴿١٢٦﴾ وَيَسْتَفْتُوْنَكَ فِي النِّسَآءِ ؕ قُلِ اللّٰهُ يُفْتِيْكُمْ فِيْهِنَّ ۙ
وَمَا يُتْلٰى عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتٰبِ فِيْ يَتٰمَى النِّسَآءِ الّٰتِيْ لَا تُؤْتُوْنَهُنَّ مَا كُتِبَ

There is nothing good in most of the secret counsels of the people: it is, however, a good thing if one secretly enjoins charity or righteousness or says something in order to set aright the affairs of the people; We will give a great reward to him who does so to please Allah. But as regards him who is bent on opposing the Messenger and is following a way other than that of the Believers after Guidance has become clear to him, We will turn such a one on the way to which he himself has turned,[143] and cast him into Hell which is the most wretched abode. 114-115

Shirk[144] is the only sin that Allah does not forgive. He may forgive whomever He will, other than this sin, for whoever associates partners with Allah does, in fact, go far astray into deviation. The *mushriks* invoke to goddesses instead of Allah: they invoke that rebellious Satan,[145] on whom Allah has laid His curse; (they obey that Satan) who said to Allah, "I will most surely take due share from your servants[146] and will mislead them; I will entice them by vain desires; I will command them and they will slit[147] the ears of the cattle by my order, and I will command them and they will make alterations and corrupt Allah's creation."[148] Therefore whoever makes this same Satan his patron, instead of God, becomes a manifest loser. Though he makes (false) promises with people and entices them by vain hopes,[149] all his promises are nothing but deception. The abode of such people is Hell from where they will find no way of escape. As regards those, who believe and do good deeds, We will admit them into Gardens underneath which canals flow, wherein they will abide for ever. This promise of Allah is true and who can be truer in his word than Allah? 116-122

The final result shall not be in accordance with your wishes nor in accordance with the wishes of the people of the Book. He who does evil shall be recompensed for it and he shall find no protector and no helper for himself against Allah. And the one who does good deeds, whether man or woman, provided that the one is a believer, will enter Paradise and they will not be wronged in the least of their rightful reward. 123-124

Who can have a better way of life than the one who surrenders himself to Allah and does what is good and follows whole heartedly the way of Abraham whom Allah chose to be His friend? All that there is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah,[150] and Allah 125-126

encircles everything.[151]

127 They ask your verdict concerning women.[152] Say, "Allah gives His verdict concerning them, and along with it reminds you of those Commandments which have already been told you in this Book,[153] that is, the Commandments concerning those orphan girls whom you do not give their lawful rights[154] and whom you do not wish to marry (or, whom you yourselves desire to marry for greed).[155] He also reminds you of the Commandments concerning those children who are weak and helpless.[156] Allah enjoins you to deal justly with orphans: Allah has full knowledge of whatever good you do."

Contd. from p. 375]

In this passage (vv. 105 - 115) on the one hand, those Muslims who tried to shield the guilty one of their own clan, have been strongly rebuked for their partisanship, and, on the other, the Muslims in general have been taught that they should not allow partisanship to stand in the way of justice. It is sheer dishonesty that one should plead the cause of one's own party man, even though he may be in the wrong, and oppose the man of the opposite party, even though he may be right.

141. He who is dishonest to others is in reality dishonest to himself because he forces all his faculties of head and heart, which have been given to him as a trust, to help him in his dishonesty. Moreover, he suppresses his conscience, which Allah has given him to safeguard his morality, so as to disable it from functioning rightly and preventing him from being dishonest. Thus a man is dishonest to others only when at first he becomes unjust to himself.

142. That is, "''Even if they had succeeded in deceiving you by making a false report in regard to the case, and in getting your decision in their own favour, they would not have done any harm to you but to themselves, for even in that case they themselves would have been guilty in the sight of Allah, and not you". This is obvious because the real offender is the one who deceives the judge and gets a wrong judgment in his own favour, and not the judge who has to decide the case on the basis of the evidence presented before him. Moreover, such a one might delude himself that he has got "the right" on his side by his cunning devices, but in reality the "real right" remains the 'right' in the record of Allah. (See also E.N. 197, Al-Baqarah).

143. That is, "The dishonest 'Muslim' turned on the way of anti-Islam: so Allah also turned him on that way". It happened like this: when the facts of the case of theft were revealed by Allah and the innocent Jew was acquitted and

Ta'amah was found guilty, this hypocrite left Madinah in anger and joined the enemies of the Holy Prophet at Makkah and began to oppose him openly.

144. In continuation of the foregoing theme, it has been stated that the hypocrite, who had in his anger gone to the side of the *mushriks*, did not fully realize the consequences of his foolish action. For this purpose, evils of the way he adopted and the nature of the fellows he accompanied have been pointed out.

145. Though none worships Satan by performing devotional ceremonies before him, the one who surrenders oneself entirely to him and follows him wherever he misleads, does act like a devotee of Satan. This also makes it plain that one who obeys any other blindly, in fact, worships him.

146. That is, "I will mark off for myself a portion of their time, their labour and their efforts, their energies and their abilities, their wealth and their offspring, and will entice them by deception so that they will devote the major portion of these in my way."

147. This alludes to one of the superstitious customs of the pagan Arabs. After a she-camel had given birth to five or ten young ones, they would slit her ears and dedicate her to their god and consider it unlawful to get any work from her. Likewise, if a camel had been a partner in the birth of ten young ones, his ears were also slit to mark that he had been dedicated to a god.

148. This does not condemn the alterations that man makes in the creation of God for their right and proper use, for in that case the whole of human civilization will stand condemned as a seduction of Satan. It is obvious that the civilization is nothing but the right and proper use of the things created by God. What the Qur'an describes as devilish alterations is to make wrong and improper use of things against human nature and against their natural functions. Hence, all those forms that are adopted as an escape from the designs of Nature are the results of the enticement of Satan *e.g.* sodomy, birth control, asceticism, etc. It is equally devilish that females should be made to give up their proper functions and to perform those duties which nature has assigned to males. Instances can be multiplied to show that the disciples of Satan consider the laws of the Creator of the Universe wrong and, therefore, are tyring to "reform" them.

149. The success of Satan depends entirely upon false promises and deceit. In order to mislead individuals and communities, he presents very rosy pictures of his wrong ways to re-assure his victims. He tempts one by holding out the promise of pleasure and success. He allures some by giving the surety of national power and prosperity, while he deludes others by the prospect of the welfare of humanity, and deceives still others by telling them that his is the right

[Contd. on p.381

لَهُنَّ وَ تَرْغَبُوْنَ اَنْ تَنْكِحُوْهُنَّ وَ الْمُسْتَضْعَفِيْنَ مِنَ الْوِلْدَانِ ۙ وَ اَنْ
تَقُوْمُوْا لِلْيَتٰمٰى بِالْقِسْطِ ؕ وَ مَا تَفْعَلُوْا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِهٖ عَلِيْمًا ﴿127﴾
وَ اِنِ امْرَاَةٌ خَافَتْ مِنْۢ بَعْلِهَا نُشُوْزًا اَوْ اِعْرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَاۤ اَنْ
يُّصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحًا ؕ وَ الصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ ؕ وَ اُحْضِرَتِ الْاَنْفُسُ الشُّحَّ ؕ وَ اِنْ
تُحْسِنُوْا وَ تَتَّقُوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرًا ﴿128﴾ وَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيْعُوْۤا اَنْ
تَعْدِلُوْا بَيْنَ النِّسَآءِ وَ لَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ فَلَا تَمِيْلُوْا كُلَّ الْمَيْلِ فَتَذَرُوْهَا
كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ ؕ وَ اِنْ تُصْلِحُوْا وَ تَتَّقُوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿129﴾ وَ
اِنْ يَّتَفَرَّقَا يُغْنِ اللّٰهُ كُلًّا مِّنْ سَعَتِهٖ ؕ وَ كَانَ اللّٰهُ وَاسِعًا حَكِيْمًا ﴿130﴾ وَ لِلّٰهِ
مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ مَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ وَ لَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَ اِيَّاكُمْ اَنِ اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ؕ وَ اِنْ تَكْفُرُوْا فَاِنَّ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي
السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ مَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ وَ كَانَ اللّٰهُ غَنِيًّا حَمِيْدًا ﴿131﴾ وَ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي
السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ مَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ وَ كَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ وَكِيْلًا ﴿132﴾ اِنْ يَّشَاْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ
اَيُّهَا النَّاسُ وَ يَاْتِ بِاٰخَرِيْنَ ؕ وَ كَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى ذٰلِكَ قَدِيْرًا ﴿133﴾ مَنْ
كَانَ يُرِيْدُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا فَعِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ثَوَابُ الدُّنْيَا وَ الْاٰخِرَةِ ؕ وَ كَانَ
اللّٰهُ سَمِيْعًا بَصِيْرًا ﴿134﴾ يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُوْنُوْا قَوّٰمِيْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَآءَ
لِلّٰهِ وَ لَوْ عَلٰۤى اَنْفُسِكُمْ اَوِ الْوَالِدَيْنِ وَ الْاَقْرَبِيْنَ ۚ اِنْ يَّكُنْ غَنِيًّا اَوْ
فَقِيْرًا فَاللّٰهُ اَوْلٰى بِهِمَا ۫ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوٰۤى اَنْ تَعْدِلُوْا ۚ وَ اِنْ تَلْوٗۤا
اَوْ تُعْرِضُوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرًا ﴿135﴾ يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا
اٰمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَ رَسُوْلِهٖ وَ الْكِتٰبِ الَّذِيْ نَزَّلَ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهٖ وَ الْكِتٰبِ الَّذِيْۤ

When[157] a woman fears ill-treatment or aversion from her husband, there is no harm if the two make peace between themselves (by means of a compromise); after all peace is the best thing.[158] Human souls are prone to narrow-mindedness,[159] but if you show generosity and fear Allah in your dealings, you may rest assured that Allah will be fully aware of all that you do.[160] It is not within your power to be perfectly equitable in your treatment with all your wives, even if you wish to be so; therefore, (in order to satisfy the dictates of Divine Law) do not lean wholly towards one wife so as to leave the other in a state of suspense.[161] If you behave righteously and fear Allah, you will find Allah Forgiving and Compassionate.[162] 128-129

But if the spouses do separate, Allah will make each one of them independent of the other by His vast powers, for His resources are limitless and He is All-Wise and All-Knowing. And everything in the heavens and the earth belongs to Him. We enjoined those whom We gave the Book before you and now enjoin you also, to fear Allah in all your dealings. But if you reject this, (you will do so at your own peril, for) Allah is the owner of everything in the heavens and the earth: He does not stand in need of anyone and is worthy of all praise. 130-131

Yes, Allah is the Owner of all that is in the heavens and the earth, and He suffices for help and protection. If He will, He may put you away, O people, and replace you by others and He is All Powerful to do this. Whoso desires the reward of this world should know that Allah possesses the rewards of both this world and the Hereafter: He hears everything and sees everything.[163] 132-134

O Believers, be you the standard-bearers of justice and witnesses for the sake of Allah,[164] even[165] though your justice and your evidence might be harmful to yourselves, or to your parents, or to your relatives. It does not matter whether the party concerned is rich or poor: Allah is their greater well-wisher than you; therefore, do not follow your own desire lest you should deviate from doing justice. If you distort your evidence or refrain from the truth, know it well that Allah is fully aware of what you do. 135

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way of arriving at the Truth. He also entices some by assuring them that there is no God and Hereafter and that life ends with death and others by giving them a

guarantee that they would escape the consequences in the Hereafter, if there is Hereafter by the intercession of this or that saint.

150. Since everything in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah, the best thing for man is to surrender his independence completely to Him, and to submit to Him unreservedly. He will come nearer to Nature, if he willingly becomes His servant and obeys Him without showing any kind of rebellion against Him.

151. That is, if man does not submit and surrender to Allah, he cannot escape His punishment, for Allah encircles him on all sides.

152. It has not been stated here what the people were asking concerning women, but the answer given to it in verse 128 points out the nature of the question.

153. This is not the answer to the question but a sort of reminder of the commandments that have already been enjoined in vv. 1-14 of this Surah about orphan girls in particular and the orphans in general in order to stress the importance of this matter in any scheme of social reform. It is because of its importance in the solution of social problems that before giving a verdict concerning marriage problems which were raised, Allah has again laid emphasis on the rights of orphans.

154. The allusion is to v. 3 of this Surah: "If you are afraid of doing injustice to the orphans...."

155. The words of the Text may also mean, ".....whom you desire to marry." We learn from a Tradition of Ḥaḍrat 'A'ishah that the Text implies both the meanings. She says, "Those people who had the charge of the orphan girls who inherited wealth, employed different methods of doing injustice to them. If an orphan girl was wealthy and also beautiful, they would desire to marry her so that they might exploit her wealth and enjoy her beauty without incurring any financial liability. If she was wealthy but ugly, they would neither themselves marry her nor let anyone else marry her, so that she might not get a protector who might claim for her right from the guardian."

156. The allusion is to the Commandments concerning the rights of orphans, given in vv. 1-14 of the Sūrah.

157. This verdict mentioned in v.127 has been given in this paragraph (vv.128-134). In order to understand it, one should grasp the nature of the problems to which this is the answer.

Several questions arose as a result of the restrictions placed on marriage in vv. 3-5 of this Sūrah. In pre-Islamic days, one was free to marry as many wives as

one liked without conceding any rights to them. But these verses limited the maximum number of wives to four and conceded the rights of dower to them and laid down the conditions of justice and equitable treatment for marrying more than one wife. As it appeared impossible to fulfil these conditions in certain cases, *e.g.*, if one's wife was barren or invalid or had lost attraction for him or was not fit for conjugal relationship, some problems arose when one married the second wife: was it a compulsory condition that one should show equal inclination towards both the wives or love them equally or show equality in the conjugal relations with them? Or, if this was not possible, did justice require that one should divorce the first wife before marrying the second? Or, if the first wife did not wish to part with her husband, would it be against the requirement of justice if she gave up some of her own rights to prevent her husband from divorcing her? This para answers such questions.

158. That is, it is better for a woman to make a settlement with him by yielding some of her rights and live with the husband with whom she had lived a part of her life than to get a divorce and separate from him.

159. Narrow-mindedness on the part of the wife is that even when she knows that she has lost those qualities that make a wife attractive to her husband, she should expect and demand the same kind of treatment that is shown only to a beloved wife. On the other hand, the husband shall be narrow-minded if he suppresses too much the rights of the wife who has lost attraction for him but who still wants to live with him, and reduces her rights to an unbearable point.

160. Allah has again appealed to the husband as He generally does in such matters, to show generosity to the wife. He has urged him to be generous to her, for she has been his companion for years even though she might have lost charm for him. He should fear God and imagine how he would fare if God withheld His favours from him on account of some defects in him.

161. Allah has made it clear that the husband cannot literally keep equality between two or more wives because they themselves cannot be equal in all respects. It is too much to demand from a husband that he should mete out equal treatment to a beautiful wife and to an ugly wife, to a young wife and to an old wife, to a healthy wife and to an invalid wife and to a good natured wife and to an ill-natured wife. These and like things naturally make a husband more inclined towards one wife than towards the other. In such cases, the Islamic Law does not demand equal treatment between them in affection and love. What it does demand is that a wife should not be so neglected as to be practically reduced to the position of the woman who has no husband at all. If the husband does not divorce her for any reason or at her own request, she should at least be treated as a wife. It is true that under such circumstances the husband is naturally more inclined towards a

favourite wife, but he should not, so to say, keep the other in such a state of suspense as if she were not his wife.

From this verse some people wrongly conclude that though the Qur'an allows more than one wife, it practically cancels this permission by asserting, "……it is not possible for you to be perfectly equitable in your treatment with all your wives…." They forget that this is only a part of the whole instruction and the Qur'an does not stop at this but adds, "….do not lean towards one wife…." As this Commandment takes into consideration the existence of more than one wife allowed by the Qur'an, it leaves no loophole of escape for the followers of Christian Europe from the fact that Islam does allow polygamy under certain conditions.

162. As Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate, He will forgive any of the shortcomings that are unaviodable because of natural factors, provided that one is not guilty of deliberate injustice, and tries his best to be just as far as it is humanly possible.

163. In order to urge the Muslims to observe strictly the Commandments concerning justice to women and orphans, Allah has, as usual, in the conclusion (vv. 130-134) given a brief but effective address by way of admonition, and has impressed upon the Believers the following things:

(1) You should never be under the delusion that you can make or mar the fate of any one, and that if you withdraw or withhold your help and support from anyone, that person will become utterly helpless. As a matter of fact, your own fate and the fate of those whom you support, is entirely in the hands of Allah and you alone are not the only means by which He supports His servants or maid servants. The resources of the Owner of the earth and the heavens are vast and limitless and He is also All-Wise and has full power to adopt means for helping anyone He wills.

(2) Allah has enjoined you, as He always enjoined the communities of the former Prophets, to conduct your affairs with fear of God in your hearts. In this lies your own good and not of God. If you do not carry out these instructions, you can do no harm to Allah but you yourselves will go the way of the former disobedient communities. The Sovereign of the Universe has never stood in need of the people. If you will not behave properly, He will remove you from leadership and appoint another community in your place. And your removal will not in the least diminish anything from the greatness of His Kingdom.

(3) Allah has in His possession all the benefits and rewards of this world and of the Next World, benefits which are temporary and transitory or permanent and ever-lasting. It is for you to make your choice from among these according to your own capacity and courage. If you are enamoured of the

temporary good things of this world and are even prepared to sacrifice the permanent blessings of the Hereafter, Allah will bestow upon you the same here and now, but in that case, you will have no portion in the permanent blessings of the Hereafter. You should not forget that owing to your own lack of capability and lack of courage, you have chosen to acquire only a drop out of the ocean of the blessings of God. Therefore it is better for you to adopt that way of obedience and submission which may enable you to acquire the vast benefits of this world and of the Hereafter.

The concluding words of this piece of admonition, "He hears everything and sees everything", have a very deep significance. As Allah is neither deaf nor blind, He makes a fine distinction between the good and the bad in the distribution of His blessings. He is fully aware of what is happening in the universe over which He is ruling and of the capabilities, efforts and intentions of everyone. Therefore, one who is disobedient to Him, should not expect those blessings which He has reserved for those who are obedient to Him.

164. The words, ".....be you the standard-bearers of justice", are very significant. They imply, "You not only have to do justice but have also to bear the standard of justice in order to eradicate injustice and establish right and justice in its place. As Believers, you have to gird up your loins to support justice, whenever your support is needed."

165. That is, "The sole aim of your testimony should be to please Allah, without any tinge of partiality, self-interest, fear or favour in it."

أَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۚ وَمَنْ يَّكْفُرْ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتِهٖ وَكُتُبِهٖ وَرُسُلِهٖ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْاٰخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلٰلًا بَعِيْدًا ﴿136﴾ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوْا ثُمَّ
اٰمَنُوْا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوْا ثُمَّ ازْدَادُوْا كُفْرًا لَّمْ يَكُنِ اللّٰهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ
سَبِيْلًا ﴿137﴾ بَشِّرِ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ بِاَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ﴿138﴾ الَّذِيْنَ يَتَّخِذُوْنَ
الْكٰفِرِيْنَ اَوْلِيَآءَ مِنْ دُوْنِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۭ اَيَبْتَغُوْنَ عِنْدَهُمُ الْعِزَّةَ فَاِنَّ
الْعِزَّةَ لِلّٰهِ جَمِيْعًا ﴿139﴾ وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتٰبِ اَنْ اِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ اٰيٰتِ
اللّٰهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَاُ بِهَا فَلَا تَقْعُدُوْا مَعَهُمْ حَتّٰى يَخُوْضُوْا فِيْ
حَدِيْثٍ غَيْرِهٖٓ ۡ اِنَّكُمْ اِذًا مِّثْلُهُمْ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ جَامِعُ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ وَالْكٰفِرِيْنَ
فِيْ جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيْعَۨا ﴿140﴾ الَّذِيْنَ يَتَرَبَّصُوْنَ بِكُمْ ۚ فَاِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِّنَ
اللّٰهِ قَالُوْٓا اَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَّعَكُمْ ۡ وَاِنْ كَانَ لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ نَصِيْبٌ ۙ قَالُوْٓا اَلَمْ
نَسْتَحْوِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَنَمْنَعْكُمْ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۭ فَاللّٰهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ
الْقِيٰمَةِ ۭ وَلَنْ يَّجْعَلَ اللّٰهُ لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ سَبِيْلًا ﴿141﴾ اِنَّ
الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ يُخٰدِعُوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ ۚ وَاِذَا قَامُوْٓا اِلَى الصَّلٰوةِ
قَامُوْا كُسَالٰى ۙ يُرَاۗءُوْنَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُوْنَ اللّٰهَ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ﴿142﴾
مُّذَبْذَبِيْنَ بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ ۡ لَآ اِلٰى هٰٓؤُلَاۗءِ وَلَآ اِلٰى هٰٓؤُلَاۗءِ ۭ وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلِ
اللّٰهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهٗ سَبِيْلًا ﴿143﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكٰفِرِيْنَ
اَوْلِيَاۗءَ مِنْ دُوْنِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۭ اَتُرِيْدُوْنَ اَنْ تَجْعَلُوْا لِلّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ
سُلْطٰنًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿144﴾ اِنَّ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ فِي الدَّرْكِ الْاَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ ۚ وَلَنْ
تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيْرًا ﴿145﴾ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ تَابُوْا وَاَصْلَحُوْا وَاعْتَصَمُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَ

O you, who profess to have believed, believe sincerely in 136-141
Allah[166] and His Messenger and the Book which He has sent down to His Messenger and in every Book that He sent down before this: for whoever disbelieves in Allah and His Angels and His Books and His Messengers and the Last Day,[167] most surely strays far away into deviation. As for those, who profess belief, then disbelieve, again profess belief and then disbelieve and then grow stubborn in their disbelief,[168] Allah will never forgive them and never show them the right way. And give the good tidings of a painful torment to the hypocrites who make the disbelievers their friends instead of the Believers. Do they go to the disbelievers to seek honour?[169] Whereas, in fact, all honour belongs to Allah alone. Allah has already sent down to you in this Book the Commandment: you should not sit in a company wherein you hear things of unbelief concerning the Revelations of Allah, and wherein these are being ridiculed, until those people are engaged in some other talk. Now if you remain here you shall be guilty like them.[170] Rest assured that Allah is going to gather the hypocrites and the disbelievers all together in Hell. The hypocrites are watching you closely to see how the wind blows. If victory comes to you from Allah, they will say to you, "Were we not with you?" And if the disbelievers gain the upper hand, they will say to them, "Were we not strong enough to fight against you? Yet we defended you from the Muslims."[171] Indeed, on the Day of Resurrection, Allah will judge between you and them, and (in this judgement) Allah has left no way for the disbelievers to overcome the Believers.

The hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, whereas, in fact, Allah 142-143
has involved them in deception. When they rise up for the *Ṣalāt*, they go reluctantly to it, merely to be seen by people and they remember Allah but little.[172] They are wavering between belief and disbelief: they are neither wholly on this side nor wholly on that side. You cannot guide to the Way the one whom Allah lets go astray.[173]

O Believers, do not take the disbelievers as your friends 144-145
instead of the Believers: do you want to furnish Allah with a clear proof against yourselves? Note it well that the hypocrites shall go to the lowest abyss of Hell, and you will not find any helper for them.

166. Here all those, who profess to believe, have been told to believe sincerely in the fundamental articles of the Muslim Faith with all their implications. This is because profession of Faith merely brings one into the fold of Islam but does not satisfy the real demands required of a true Muslim. Therefore one who professes to embrace Islam has been asked to believe sincerely and seriously in Islam and mould one's thoughts, tastes, likes, attitudes and conduct in accordance with one's belief and establish friendship and enmity accordingly, and put in all one's efforts in accordance with one's belief.

167. Here *kufr* implies two things :

(1) a person may reject Islam outright;

(2) one may pay lipservice to Islam but may not (sincerely) believe in it or may show by one's conduct that one does not, in fact, believe in Islam, in spite of one's profession.

Here *kufr* implies both these things, and the verse warns that neither kind of *kufr* can go side by side with the fundamental articles of Islamic Faith and will mislead the one who adopts it, away from the Truth into the paths of deviation.

168. These are the people who do not consider Faith a serious matter but play with it like a toy to gratify their whims and lusts. They adopt Islam, if and when they are swayed to it by some fanciful notion, and become disbelievers, if another notion moves them away to the opposite side. Or, they become Muslims when their interests demand it and become disbelievers, without the least hesitation, if their interests lie in disbelief. Obviously, for such people there is neither forgiveness nor guidance from Allah. They do not stop at their own disbelief but go much further in it. They strive to turn other Muslims also away from Islam, conspire against it and make open designs to harm it so as to raise the standard of *kufr* high up and to pull down the standard of Islam. As this is an addition to the sin of one's personal disbelief, it deserves much severe punishment than the offence of the one who disbelieves in Islam but is not antagonistic to it.

169. The Arabic word *'Izzat* is more comprehensive than the English word honour, "the regard in which one is held by one's followers". *'Izzat* refers to such a high regard and secure position as is inviolable.

170. The Command to the Believers to quit the company of the disbelievers, as soon as they get engaged in ridiculing Islam, is contained in v. 68 of Al-An'am which was revealed earlier than An-Nisā'. If a Believer sits in the company of disbelievers and coolly listens to the ridicule of Divine Revelations he becomes a partner in that blasphemy, and there remains little difference between him and the disbelievers.

171. The hypocrites of every age have always enjoyed all the benefits conferred by Islam, by professing it with their tongue, and nominally joining the Muslim Community. At the same time they enjoy all the benefits they can derive from the disbelievers, by mixing with them and assuring them, "We are not bigoted Muslims though we are nominally connected with them. We are akin to you in culture, in thoughts and in the way of life and our interests and loyalties are the same as yours. Therefore, you should rest assured that we will side with you in the conflict between Islam and *kufr*."

172. The offering of the *Ṣalāt* in congregation has been held out as a test of one's being a sincere Believer or a hypocrite because during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet one could not be considered a member of the Islamic Community unless one offered the *Ṣalāt* regularly and punctually. Just as every association or organisation considers the absence of a member without genuine excuse from its meetings a sign of his lack of interest, and expels him from it for continuous absence, so if a Muslim absented himself from the *Ṣalāt* in congregation, it was considered a clear sign of his lack of interest in Islam. And if he continuously absented himself from it, this was taken as a proof of his desertion from Islam. That is why even the confirmed hypocrites of that time had to join the *Ṣalāt* in congregation five times a day; otherwise they could not be counted as members of the Islamic Community. But what distinguished them from the true Believers was that the true Believers went to the mosques with great enthusiasm before time and stayed there even after the Prayer was over which was a clear proof of their genuine interest in it. On the other hand, the very call to the Prayer sounded like a death knell to a hypocrite. He would rise up reluctantly to join the congregation, but his whole demeanour clearly showed that he was offering his *Ṣalāt* unwillingly. Then after the Prayer he would leave the mosque in haste as if he had been released from prison. Thus, all his movements showed that he had no interest in the remembrance of Allah.

173. It declares that no human being has the power to guide to the right way the one who himself does not intend to get guidance from the Book of Allah and the excellent pattern of His Messenger; whom Allah turns to the wrong way to which he himself is inclined and shuts all the doors of guidance against him because of his own quest for deviation. And this happens in accordance with the Divine Law that man gets what he seeks and strives for. For instance, if one seeks to make one's provisions by lawful means and strives for the same, God provides lawful means for him and shuts unlawful doors against him, in proportion to the intensity of the sincerity of his intention. On the contrary, if one has the intention of making one's provisions by unlawful means and strives for the same, Allah

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اَخْلَصُوْا دِيْنَهُمْ لِلّٰهِ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ؕ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِ اللّٰهُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ
اَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿۱۴۶﴾ مَا يَفْعَلُ اللّٰهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ اِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ وَاٰمَنْتُمْ ؕ
وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيْمًا ﴿۱۴۷﴾

لَا يُحِبُّ اللّٰهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوْٓءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ اِلَّا مَنْ ظُلِمَ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ

سَمِيْعًا عَلِيْمًا ﴿۱۴۸﴾ اِنْ تُبْدُوْا خَيْرًا اَوْ تُخْفُوْهُ اَوْ تَعْفُوْا عَنْ سُوْٓءٍ فَاِنَّ
اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا قَدِيْرًا ﴿۱۴۹﴾ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَكْفُرُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖ وَيُرِيْدُوْنَ
اَنْ يُّفَرِّقُوْا بَيْنَ اللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖ وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَّنَكْفُرُ
بِبَعْضٍ ۙ وَّيُرِيْدُوْنَ اَنْ يَّتَّخِذُوْا بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ سَبِيْلًا ﴿۱۵۰﴾ اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
الْكٰفِرُوْنَ حَقًّا ۚ وَاَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ عَذَابًا مُّهِيْنًا ﴿۱۵۱﴾ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا
بِاللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖ وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوْا بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ اُولٰٓئِكَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِيْهِمْ
اُجُوْرَهُمْ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿۱۵۲﴾ يَسْـَٔلُكَ اَهْلُ الْكِتٰبِ اَنْ تُنَزِّلَ
عَلَيْهِمْ كِتٰبًا مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ فَقَدْ سَاَلُوْا مُوْسٰٓى اَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذٰلِكَ فَقَالُوْٓا
اَرِنَا اللّٰهَ جَهْرَةً فَاَخَذَتْهُمُ الصّٰعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ ۚ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ
مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْهُمُ الْبَيِّنٰتُ فَعَفَوْنَا عَنْ ذٰلِكَ ۚ وَاٰتَيْنَا مُوْسٰى
سُلْطٰنًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿۱۵۳﴾ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّوْرَ بِمِيْثَاقِهِمْ وَقُلْنَا لَهُمُ ادْخُلُوا
الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَّقُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا تَعْدُوْا فِى السَّبْتِ وَاَخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ
مِّيْثَاقًا غَلِيْظًا ﴿۱۵۴﴾ فَبِمَا نَقْضِهِمْ مِّيْثَاقَهُمْ وَكُفْرِهِمْ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَ
قَتْلِهِمُ الْاَنْۢبِيَآءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَّقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوْبُنَا غُلْفٌ ؕ بَلْ طَبَعَ اللّٰهُ
عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ﴿۱۵۵﴾ وَّبِكُفْرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلٰى

As regards those of them, who repent and mend their ways and then hold fast to Allah and dedicate their religion sincerely to Allah,[174] such people are with the Believers, and Allah will most surely bestow a great reward on the Believers. And why should Allah punish you, if you are grateful[175] and behave like true Believers? For Allah fully appreciates worth[176] and knows everything about everyone. 146-147

Allah does not like that a person should utter evil words except when one has been wronged: Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Though you are allowed to give expression to evil words, if you have been wronged,) yet if you go on doing good openly and secretly or at least refrain from evil, you should know that Allah is Forgiving, whereas He is All-Powerful to punish.[177] 148-149

Those, who deny Allah and His Messengers and desire to draw a line between Allah and His Messengers, and say, "We will acknowledge some and deny others," they seek a midway between belief and disbelief. All those are confirmed disbelievers,[178] and We have prepared an ignominious punishment for such disbelievers. In contrast to them, We will most surely give their due reward[179] to those who believe in Allah and all His Messengers and do not discriminate against any of them; for Allah is very Forgiving and very Compassionate.[180] 150-152

If the people of the Book are today asking you to cause a Book to come down upon them from heaven,[181] they have already made even more monstrous demands from Moses. They said to him, "Make us see Allah with our own eyes." As a result of their wickedness a thunder-bolt smote them all of a sudden.[182] Then they took the calf as the object of their worhsip, after they had seen clear signs:[183] but even after this, We forgave them. We bestowed upon Moses a clear Commandment and raised Mount Tūr over them and took a Covenant from them (to obey it).[184] We enjoined them to enter the gate bowing down humbly.[185] We said to them, "Do not break the Sabbath," and took a solemn Covenant[186] from them to observe this law strictly. But they broke the Covenant, rejected the clear signs of Allah and slew some Prophets of Allah unjustly and declared, "Our hearts are quite secure under cover."[187] — Nay,[188] Allah has sealed their hearts because of their worship of falsehood and this is why they believe but 153-155

little.

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provides him with the same through unlawful means. Allah alone has the power to guide any individual on any way whatsoever, and no one can take any course, right or wrong, without His permission and without His help, but He allows and helps every one to proceed on the way he chooses for himself. If one loves Allah and is a seeker after Truth and sincerely strives to follow His way,He allows him and helps him to think and act on the right lines leading to the right way and provides means for him to proceed on the same way. But if one chooses to follow wrong ways and strives to proceed on wrong ways, Allah shuts the way of guidance against him and opens before him evil ways which he chooses for himself. No one has the power to prevent such a one from evil thoughts and evil deeds and from spending his energies in evil ways. It is thus obvious that none can guide to the right way the wretched one who deliberately loses it and whom Allah leads astray in consequence of his intentional deviation.

174. That person, who dedicates his Faith to Allah, devotes his whole life earnestly and faithfully for Him and reserves all his loyalties, interests, and affections for Him alone. In short, his attachment to Allah becomes so intense that he is ready to sacrifice anything for Him.

175. That is, "If you show your sincere gratitude to Allah and do not adopt an attitude of ingratitude and treachery towards Him in regard to the benefits and blessings you have received from Him, there is no reason why He should punish you for nothing."

The right attitude of gratitude is that one should sincerely appreciate the kindness of the benefactor, acknowledge it with his tongue and show his gratitude by his conduct. This implies three things: First, the grateful person should attribute the kindness to the real benefactor and should not associate anyone else with him in gratitude and acknowledgement. Second, he should be full of the feelings of love and loyalty for his benefactor and should not cherish any such feelings for the opponents of the benefactor. Third, he should be obedient to his benefactor, and should not in any way use or employ the benefits conferred on him against the will of the benefactor.

176. The word *shākir*, when applied to Allah, means that He appreciates the worth of the services of His servant; and when applied to the servant, it means that he expresses his gratitude to his Lord for His blessings. Allah appreciates fully the quantity and the quality of the services that are rendered by His servants for His cause and deprives none of them of the due rewards: nay, He rewards their services most generously and gives much more than they deserve. Of course, His

treatment of His servants is quite different from their own treatment of their fellow-men. They under-estimate the worth of the services rendered by a fellow-man and take him to task severely for an omission. Allah in His bounty rewards much more generously than His servant deserves for any service rendered by him in His cause, but is very lenient and forgiving for any omission or neglect of duty shown by His servants.

177. The moral instructions contained in this verse are of the highest standard. The Muslims have been taught to practise virtue or at least to show forbearance even in the face of provocation. At the time of its revelation, the hypocrites, the Jews and the idolaters were all engaged in opposing Islam by all possible means and were maltreating its followers in every conceivable way. Therefore it was but natural that the Muslims should be filled with feelings of anger and hatred. When Allah noticed the storm of emotion rising in their hearts, he warned them that He did not like that they give vent to their feelings, though they were wronged and therefore justified, if in retaliation they gave expression to their bitter feelings. They were taught that they, as Muslims, were expected to go on doing good openly and secretly or at least refrain from doing evil for evil. They were instructed, "You should try to mould your character after that of your Allah, Who is so Forbearing that He does not withhold His provisions even from the most wicked culprits and shows forbearance to the most sinful offenders. You should, therefore, have a big heart and show forbearance even in the most critical and provocative situations."

178. That is, there is absolutely no doubt that all those people are equally disbelievers, who deny Allah all His Messengers: who acknowledge Allah but deny His Messengers: who accept some of the Messengers and reject others: each and everyone of such people is a confirmed disbeliever.

179. Full assurance has been given to those who acknowledge Allah as their sole Sovereign and Deity, and submit to and follow all His Messengers, that they deserve to be rewarded according to the quality of their good deeds. In contrast to them, there is ignominious punishment for those who do not acknowledge Allah as the sole Sovereign and Sustainer, or for those who adopted the rebellious way by accepting some of His representatives and rejecting others. Allah does not accept any of the apparently good deeds of such people because it has no legal status in His sight.

180. As Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate, He will be very lenient in judging the deeds of those who believe in Him and His Messengers and will not be hard on them.

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مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَانًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٥٦﴾ وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ۖ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ
اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُم بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۚ
وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا ﴿١٥٧﴾ بَل رَّفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٥٨﴾
وَإِن مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ ۖ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا ﴿١٥٩﴾ فَبِظُلْمٍ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ
طَيِّبَاتٍ أُحِلَّتْ لَهُمْ وَبِصَدِّهِمْ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ﴿١٦٠﴾ وَأَخْذِهِمُ
الرِّبَا وَقَدْ نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَأَكْلِهِمْ أَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ ۚ وَأَعْتَدْنَا
لِلْكَافِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٦١﴾ لَّٰكِنِ الرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَ
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ وَالْمُقِيمِينَ
الصَّلَاةَ وَالْمُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ
سَنُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٦٢﴾ إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ نُوحٍ وَّ
النَّبِيِّينَ مِن بَعْدِهِ ۚ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ
وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَىٰ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ ۚ
وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ زَبُورًا ﴿١٦٣﴾ وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِن قَبْلُ وَ
رُسُلًا لَّمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ ۚ وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ تَكْلِيمًا ﴿١٦٤﴾ رُّسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ
وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ ۚ وَكَانَ
اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٦٥﴾ لَّٰكِنِ اللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنزَلَ إِلَيْكَ أَنزَلَهُ بِعِلْمِهِ ۖ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿١٦٦﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَ

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.....Then[189] they went so far in their unbelief that they uttered 156-162
a monstrous calumny against Mary:[190] they themselves bragged, "We have slain Jesus, son of Mary, a Messenger of Allah."[191] Whereas[192] in fact, they did not slay him nor did they crucify him but the matter was made dubious for them.[193] And those who have differed about this matter are also in doubt concerning it. They have no knowledge of it but they follow mere conjectures,[194] for it is certain that they did not kill Jesus. Nay, the fact is that Allah had raised him to Himself,[195] for Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise. There shall be none among the people of the Book but will believe in him before his death,[196] and he will be a witness against them on the Day of Resurrection.[197] — In short,[198] it is because of these unjust things of those who became Jews and because they often stand in the way of Allah,[199] and because they take interest, which had been prohibited,[200] and because they devour unlawfully the property of others — it is because of all these transgressions that We made unlawful many clean and pure things which were formerly lawful for them.[201] We have prepared a painful torment for those among them who disbelieve,[202] but most surely We will reward richly all those among them who have profound learning and who are honest and who believe in what has been sent down to you, and what was sent down before you,[203] and who establish the *Ṣalāt*, pay the *Zakāt* dues and believe sincerely in Allah and the Last Day.

O Muhammad, We have sent Revelation to you just as We sent 163-166
it to Noah and other Prophets after him.[204] We also sent Revelation to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob, and the descendants of Jacob, and Jesus and Job and Jonah and Aaron and Solomon, and We gave the Psalms to David.[205] We also sent Revelation to those Messengers whom We have already mentioned to you and to those Messengers whom We have not mentioned to you; and We spoke directly to Moses as in conversation.[206] All these Messengers were sent as bearers of good news and warners,[207] so that, after their coming, people should have no excuse left to plead before Allah;[208] Allah is, in any case All-Powerful, All-Wise. (People may or may not believe it) but Allah bears witness that what He has sent down to you, He has sent that down with His knowledge and the angels also bear witness to it, though Allah's being a witness alone suffices.

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181. This was one of the strange demands of the Jews of Madinah. They said to the Holy Prophet, "We will not accept you as a Prophet unless you cause a written Book to come down to us from heaven before our very eyes or cause a written message to come down to each one of us to this effect: 'Muhammad (peace be upon him) is Our Messenger; so believe in him'."

182. A mere mention of this incident has been made in the short list of the crimes of the Israelites to which reference has been made here to show how impertinent they had become. This incident has already been mentioned in v. 55 of Al-Baqarah (For details, please see E.N. 17, Al-Baqarah).

183. "Clear signs": the signs which the children of Israel had seen, one after the other, since the time of the Prophet Moses appointment as a Messenger. They had also witnessed the drowning of Pharaoh and his army and many other signs during their exodus from Egypt. Therefore, they knew full well that it was Allah, Lord of the Universe, and not a calf, Who had rescued them from the tyranny of a powerful ruler like Pharaoh. Yet they were so enamoured of false gods that they forsook God, their real Benefactor, and made the calf of gold the object of their worship.

184. "Clear Commandment": the Commandments inscribed on the tablets which were given to the Prophet Moses. (See also Al-Baqarah II:63 and Al-A'raf VII:171).

The "Covenant" was the pledge taken from the chiefs of Israel at the foot of Mount Tur. This has already been mentioned in Al-Baqarah, II: 63 and is also referred to in Al-A'rāf VII:171.

185. Please refer to vv. 58-89 and E.N. 75 of Al-Baqarah.

186. Please see v. 65 and E.N.'s 82 and 83 of Al-Baqarah.

187. Reference has already been made to such a saying of the Jews in Al-Baqarah II:88. Just as all the worshippers of falsehood are proud of their obduracy against the truth, so were the Jews proud of their beliefs, prejudices, rituals and customs that they had inherited from their forefathers and could not be persuaded to give them up. That is why they always turned a deaf ear to the Message of the Prophets of Allah with the answer: "We are determined to reject your invitation, even though you bring strong arguments in support thereof. We will adhere strongly and faithfully to what we believe and practise." (Also see E.N. 94 of Al-Baqarah).

188. This is a parenthesis.

189. This is in continuation of the theme under discussion.

190. The calumny against Mary concerning the birth of Jesus has been declared here as "disbelief" because it was not directed against the person of innocent Mary or her son but against Jesus Christ, the Messenger of God. The Jews had absolutely no ground for suspicion about his miraculous birth without father, because God had caused the whole Community to stand as witness to the miracle. When Virgin Mary, who belonged to the noble and well-known religious family of the Israelites, came home with the new-born child, a large crowd gathered there and demanded an explanation from her. But she simply pointed to the child. The crowd could not understand how a child in the cradle could speak, but to their utter astonishment, the child began to speak clearly and fluently and addressing the crowd, he declared, "I am Allah's servant: Allah has given me the Book and made me a Prophet." (Maryam, XIX : 30) Thus Allah cut at the very root of the slander about his birth. That is why none ever accused Mary of fornication nor taunted Jesus with being an illegitimate son until he attained his maturity. But when at the age of thirty, he started his mission to invite the people to the way of God and rebuked the Jews for their evil deeds and exposed the hypocrisies of their scholars and jurists and warned the whole community of the consequences of moral degradation, they turned against him. Instead of accepting his message and making sacrifices for the cause of God, and reforming their evil ways, these impudent and unscrupulous criminals resorted to all sorts of dirty tricks and devilish designs to suppress the voice of Truth. It was then that they made that monstrous calumny which they had never uttered before during the previous thirty years of his life, because they knew it for certain that Mary and her son were absolutely free from this taint. Thus their calumny, in fact, was not due to any real suspicion, which they might be harbouring in their hearts, but it was a pure calumny, which they deliberately invented for opposing the Truth. That is why Allah declared it to be disbelief instead of wickedness and falsehood, for their real aim by this accusation was to hinder the people from the Way of God and not merely to slander an innocent lady.

191. The fact that they bragged of slaying Jesus, knowing him to be a Messenger of God, shows how bold they had become in their crimes. We have shown in the previous Note that the miracle of his speech in the cradle had let no doubt whatsoever to remain in the minds of the Jews about his Prophethood. Then the clear signs that they witnessed from him (III : 49) were a conclusive proof that he was really a Prophet of God. Therefore their wicked behaviour towards him was not the result of any misunderstanding about his Prophethood, but was an intentional crime against the one who had been appointed by Allah as Messenger.

Though it appears very strange that a community should slay a person whom they know to be and acknowledge a Prophet of Allah, yet it is so, for the ways of wicked communities are strange. They cannot and do not tolerate a person who criticises them for their evil ways and prohibits unlawful things. Such people, even though they be the Prophets of Allah, have always been persecuted, imprisoned and slain by their own wicked people.

As a proof thereof, the following is quoted from the Talmud: "When the city (Jerusalem) had been captured, Nebuchadnezzar marched with the princes and officers of the Temple..... On one of the walls he found the mark of an arrow's head as though somebody had been killed or hit nearby, and he asked who was killed there.

"Zachariah, the son of Yehoyadah, the high priest", answered the people. "He rebuked us incessantly on account of our transgressions and we were tired of his words and put him to death."

Even according to the Bible, when the Prophet Jeremiah rebuked the Jews on account of their transgressions, they accused him of being in conspiracy with the Chaldeans and traitor against his people and sent him to prison. Likewise had the Jews treated John the Baptist a couple of years before the crucifixion of the Prophet Jesus. They counted John as a Prophet and acknowledged him as one of the most righteous men of their community, but when he criticised Herod (the ruler of Judea) for his evil ways, he was not tolerated. He was first sent to prison, then beheaded on the demand of Herod's beloved, the dancing girl.

It is, therefore, obvious from their record that when they presumed that they had crucified Jesus Christ, they bragged: "We have slain a Messenger of Allah."

192. This is another parenthesis.

193. This verse is explicit on the point that the Prophet Jesus Christ was rescued from crucifixion and that the Christians and the Jews are both wrong in believing that he died on the cross. A comparative study of the Qur'an and the Bible shows that most probably it was Jesus himself who stood his trial in the court of Pilate, who sentenced him to death, but they could not kill or crucify him, for Allah raised him to Himself.

This is what happened, Pilate knew fully well that Christ was innocent and had been brought in his court out of jealousy. So he asked the crowd whether Jesus Christ should be released on the occasion of the Festival or Barabbas, a notorious robber. But the high priests and elders persuaded the crowd to ask for the release of Barabbas and for the crucifixion of Jesus. After this, God, Who can do any and everything He wills, raised Jesus to Himself and rescued him from crucifixion and

the one who was crucified afterwards was somehow or other taken for Christ. Nevertheless, his miraculous escape does not lessen the wicked crime of the Jews, because they knew it well that the one, whom they crowned with a crown of thorns, and on whose face they spat and whom they crucified with disgrace was Christ, the son of Mary. As regards the matter how "it was made doubtful for them" that they had crucified Jesus, we have no means of ascertaining. Therefore it is not right to base on mere guess-work and rumours an answer to the question how the Jews were made to believe that they had crucified him, whereas in fact, Jesus, the son of Mary, had escaped from them.

194. "Those who have differed": the Christians. They do not agree in their versions of crucifixion. The very fact that they offer so many different accounts of the matter is by itself a proof that they possess no definite knowledge of it and are, therefore, in doubt about it. One version is that the person who was crucified was not Jesus but someone who bore his likeness, whom the Jews and the Romans had disgracefully put on the cross, while Jesus was standing nearby and laughing at their folly. Another version is that the one who was nailed to the cross was Jesus, but he did not die on the cross and was alive when he was taken down from it. Some others say that he died on the cross but came to life afterwards and met his disciples more than ten times and talked to them. Still others say that death due to crucifixion occurred on the physical body of Jesus and he was buried but the Divine Spirit within him was raised. There are still others who say that after his death Jesus came to life with his body and was raised with his body. Obviously, if the Christians had any knowledge of the truth, they would not have given so many different versions of it.

195. Here Allah has told the fact of the matter. The Qur'ān explicitly states that the Jews did not succeed in putting Jesus to death and that Allah raised him to Himself, but it is silent about the nature and details of the matter and does neither say explicitly whether Allah raised him body and soul together from the earth to some place in heaven, nor that he died like other mortals and only his soul was raised to heaven. Therefore, on the basis of the Qur'ān neither aspect can be definitely denied or affirmed. But a study of the style clearly shows that whatever be the nature of being raised in any case Allah certainly treated the Prophet Jesus in an extraordinary way. The following considerations lead to the conclusion that the incident was extraordinary :

First, the belief in the ascension of the Prophet Jesus, body and soul together, was already prevalent among the Christians, and was one of the causes which misled a large section of them to believe in his divinity. But, inspite of it, the Qur'ān not only has not clearly refuted it but has used the same word "ascension" for the incident that the Christians use for it. Had it not been an

extraordinary incident factually the Qur''ān would not have used such ambiguous words as help support a doctrine of the divinity of Jesus.

Second, had Allah meant by the words used in verse 158 that "Allah caused his death", or that "Allah raised him in rank", more explicit words would have been used. In the first case, more appropriate words would be: "No doubt they did not slay him nor crucified him but Allah rescued him alive from them and then gave him natural death", and in the second: "The Jews intended to dishonour him by crucifixion, but Allah raised him very high in rank", as have been used in the case of the Prophet Idris: "And We raised him to a high position". (Maryam, XIX : 57).

Third, if the incident related here meant merely the natural death of Christ, the words, "And Allah is All-Powerful and All-Wise", after it would be meaningless. These words can be appropriately used only in connection with some extraordinary manifestation of the power and wisdom of Allah.

The only argument that can be cited in support of the interpretation of verse 158 that Jesus died a natural death is the use of the word *mutawaffika* in verse 55 of Āl-'Imran, in connection with the incident. But as we have explained in the corresponding E.N. 51, the word is not explicit in the meaning of natural death but can be applied both to take the soul and to take the body and soul together. As there is scope for both the interpretations in this word, its use cannot refute the above mentioned arguments against the meaning: "Allah caused his death". Those who insist on this interpretation argue that there is no other instance in which *tawaffā* might have been used for the seizure of both body and soul together. This is meaningless, for this is the only incident of its kind in the whole human history. The only thing to be considered is whether this word may lexically be used in this sense or not. If it can be used, we have to face the question: Why does the Qur'ān not use a direct word for death instead of a word which is liable to support the doctrine of Ascension, which in turn, has given rise to the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus? The use of this word is a clear proof that there was something extraordinary about the incident. Above all, the doctrine of Ascension is further strengthened by the Traditions according to which the Prophet Jesus, son of Mary, will come again to the earth before the Resurrection and fight the Dajjāl. (These Traditions have been cited in the Appendix to the commentary of Surah Al-Ahzāb). These categorically prove the second coming of Jesus. Therefore, it would be more rational to believe that he is living somewhere in the universe before this second coming than that he lies dead and buried somewhere before his advent.

196. This has been interpreted in two ways and both are likely. (Here by the people of the Book are meant the Jews and may also be the Christians). According to the first interpretation, as adopted in the Translation, it means: "All

the people of the Book, alive at the time of the natural death of Christ, will have believed in him, that is, in his Prophethood." The second interpretation of "There shall be none among the people of the Book but will believe in him before his death" is that all the people of the Book before their death do realize and believe that Christ is really a Messenger of God, though that belief will be of no avail at the time. Both these interpretations have been put forward by several Companions and their followers and renowned commentators, but its real meaning is only known to Allah.

197. That is, "In the court of God, Christ will give testimony against the Jews and the Christians that they rejected, neglected and distorted the Message brought by him." Some details of this testimony are given in vv. 116-117 of Al-Ma'idah.

198. The main theme that was broken by the parenthesis, which ends here, has been resumed.

199. It is an irony that the Jews, who possessed a Divine Book and the heritage of the Prophets, should not only have themselves discarded the way of God but also frequently stood in the way of God. It is a fact that they have always been opposing and placing obstacles in the way of those movements that have ever been started for the promulgation of the Truth and have been starting or helping start movements against the way of God. Their latest crime in this connection is Communism which has for the first time in history based a system of life and a system of government on the deliberate and explicit denial of God in open oponition to His Law for the eradication God-worship as its declared aims. The author of another perverted doctrine of the modern age, Freudianism, which has helped mislead the people from the way of Allah, is also a Jew.

200. Here is the Biblical law that clearly prohibits interest: "If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury."

"If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that time the sun goeth down:

For that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin wherein shall he sleep? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; for I am gracious." (Exodus 22 : 25-27).

Besides this, interest has also been prohibited at several other places in the Torah, but in spite of these prohibitive decrees, the Jews, who profess to believe in the same Torah, are the biggest usurers in the world and have become proverbially notorious for their narrow-mindedness and hard-heartedness.

201. Probably this refers to the same thing that occurs in Al-An'am, VI:146, that is, all animals with claws, and the fat of sheep and oxen were forbidden to the Jews. Besides this, possibly it may also refer to the restrictions and hardships which are contained in the law books composed by their own Jurists. Indeed, it is a great punishment that the bounds of life should be narrowed for any community. (For details please see E.N. 122, Al-An'ām).

202. History bears witness to the exemplary punishment that Allah has prepared for those Jews who have discarded the Divine Faith and given up obedience to Allah and adopted the attitude of disbelief and rebellion. For the last two thousand years, they have never possessed a place where they could live with honour. They have been scattered all over the world and are treated like foreigners and disgracefully, cruelly and oppressively in one country or the other, and there is no palce in the world, where they are sincerely respected, inspite of their great wealth. Above all, this community has remained a living object lesson for the other nations, for it has been kept in existence inspite of its degradation, whereas other nations are exterminated when they become worthless. Thus Allah is causing them to taste in this very world a bit of the torment of Hell where the evil-doers "will neither be in a state of death nor in a state of life." This is because they have been showing the audacity of rebelling against Allah while they were at the same time carrying the Book of Allah with them. As regards punishment in the Hereafter, it may safely be predicted that it shall be much more painful than this. In order to remove any misunderstanding that might arise regarding the existence of the State of Israel, it will be worthwhile to refer to v. 112 of Āl-'Imrān, and the corresponding E.N. 90.

203. The reference is to those learned Jews who are fully acquainted with the real nature of the Divine Books, who are just, fair and free from every kind of prejudice, obduracy and self-worship, who do not blindly follow their fore-fathers but readily accept the Truth that they learn from the revealed Books. Therefore they are able to recognize easily that the teachings of the Qur'ān are the same as were taught by the former Prophets, and then sincerely believe in both.

204. This is to emphasize the fact that the Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be peace) has not come with a new thing and that he does not claim to present something for the first time, but he has, in fact, received Guidance from the same source of knowledge from which all the Prophets before him had received, and that he too is presenting the same Truth and Reality that has always been presented by the Prophets, who were raised from different corners of the Earth.

The literal meaning of *wahī* is: (1) to give hint of, (2) to communicate to the mind, (3) to convey by covert suggestion, and (4) to send a message.

205. Only a part of the Book of Psalms in the existing Bible consists of the Psalms of the Prophet David, and they bear his name. Its remaining constituent parts are the psalms of other people, and have been attributed to their authors. It should also be noted that the study of the real Zabūr, the Psalms of David, shows that it is a Revelation of God. Likewise, additions have been made in the Book of the Proverbs of Solomon and the last two chapters were obviously added afterwards. But, in spite of this, the major portion of the Proverbs contains gems of Truth and Wisdom. The same is true of the Book of Job. A study of this reveals that, though it contains gems of wisdom, it is wrong to attribute the whole of it to the Prophet Job. Whereas the Qur'ān and the introductory chapters of this very Book bear witness to the great fortitude shown by the Prophet Job, its subsequent chapters show that he was an embodiment of grievance against God, and that, in vain, did his companions try their best to convince him that God was not unjust.

Besides these, the major portions of the seventeen Books of the Israelite Prophets in the Old Testament are evidently genuine Revelations; especially the Books of Joshua, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos and some others contain many such passages that show the grandeur of Divine Revelation and move one to ecstasy. Their high moral teachings, their campaign against idolatry and their sound arguments prove the Oneness of God, and their strong criticism of the degeneration of Israel clearly shows that these and the sermons of Jesus Christ in the New Testament and the Qur'ān came from one and the same source.

206. The way Revelation was communicated to the Prophet Moses was different from that of the other Prophets. They heard either a voice or a Message from an angel, but the Prophet Moses had this privilege that Allah Himself had a direct talk with him as in a dialogue, *e.g.*, the dialogue cited in Ṭa Ha, XX :11-48 in the Qur'ān. This privilege has also been mentioned in the Bible: "……And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." (Exodus 33:11).

207. That is, all the Prophets had one and the same mission. They gave good news to those who believed in the Divine Message and mended their ways in accordance with it and warning to those who adopted wrong ways of thought and action that they would meet with serious sequences in the end.

208. The Prophets were sent with the sole object that they should set forth before mankind the Right Way, both theoretically and practically, so that on the Day of Judgement no evil-doer should be in a position to offer the excuse that he was ignorant of the Truth. That is why Allah appointed Messengers in different parts of the world and sent down Books. These Messengers imparted the

[Contd. on p. 406

صَدُّوْا عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ قَدْ ضَلُّوْا ضَلٰلًا بَعِيْدًا ﴿١٦٧﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا
وَظَلَمُوْا لَمْ يَكُنِ اللّٰهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ طَرِيْقًا ﴿١٦٨﴾ إِلَّا طَرِيْقَ
جَهَنَّمَ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَآ اَبَدًا ۭ وَكَانَ ذٰلِكَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ يَسِيْرًا ﴿١٦٩﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ
قَدْ جَاۗءَكُمُ الرَّسُوْلُ بِالْحَقِّ مِنْ رَّبِّكُمْ فَاٰمِنُوْا خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ ۭ وَاِنْ تَكْفُرُوْا ﴿١٧٠﴾
فَاِنَّ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۭ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ﴿١٧٠﴾
يٰٓاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ لَا تَغْلُوْا فِيْ دِيْنِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُوْلُوْا عَلَى اللّٰهِ اِلَّا الْحَقَّ ۭ
اِنَّمَا الْمَسِيْحُ عِيْسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ وَكَلِمَتُهٗ ۚ اَلْقٰىهَآ اِلٰى
مَرْيَمَ وَرُوْحٌ مِّنْهُ ۡ فَاٰمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖ ۚ وَلَا تَقُوْلُوْا ثَلٰثَةٌ ۭ اِنْتَهُوْا
خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ ۭ اِنَّمَا اللّٰهُ اِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ ۭ سُبْحٰنَهٗٓ اَنْ يَّكُوْنَ لَهٗ وَلَدٌ ۘ لَهٗ مَا ع ٣ ٩ ٣
فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۭ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ وَكِيْلًا ﴿١٧١﴾ لَنْ يَّسْتَنْكِفَ الْمَسِيْحُ اَنْ
يَّكُوْنَ عَبْدًا لِّلّٰهِ وَلَا الْمَلٰۗىِٕكَةُ الْمُقَرَّبُوْنَ ۭ وَمَنْ يَّسْتَنْكِفْ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهٖ
وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ فَسَيَحْشُرُهُمْ اِلَيْهِ جَمِيْعًا ﴿١٧٢﴾ فَاَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا
الصّٰلِحٰتِ فَيُوَفِّيْهِمْ اُجُوْرَهُمْ وَيَزِيْدُهُمْ مِّنْ فَضْلِهٖ ۚ وَاَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ
اسْتَنْكَفُوْا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوْا فَيُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ۙ وَّلَا يَجِدُوْنَ لَهُمْ
مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلِيًّا وَّلَا نَصِيْرًا ﴿١٧٣﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاۗءَكُمْ بُرْهَانٌ
مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَاَنْزَلْنَآ اِلَيْكُمْ نُوْرًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿١٧٤﴾ فَاَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ
وَاعْتَصَمُوْا بِهٖ فَسَيُدْخِلُهُمْ فِيْ رَحْمَةٍ مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلٍ ۙ وَّيَهْدِيْهِمْ
اِلَيْهِ صِرَاطًا مُّسْتَقِيْمًا ﴿١٧٥﴾ يَسْتَفْتُوْنَكَ ۭ قُلِ اللّٰهُ يُفْتِيْكُمْ فِي الْكَلٰلَةِ ۭ اِنِ
امْرُؤٌا هَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَهٗ وَلَدٌ وَّلَهٗٓ اُخْتٌ فَلَهَا نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ ۚ وَهُوَ

يَرِثُهَآ إِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَّهَا وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن كَانَتَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُمَا الثُّلُثَانِ مِمَّا
تَرَكَ ۚ وَإِن كَانُوٓا إِخْوَةً رِّجَالًا وَنِسَآءً فَلِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ ۗ
يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ أَن تَضِلُّوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٦﴾



Those, who disbelieve in it and hinder others from the way of Allah, have strayed far awayinto deviation from the Truth. Allah will never forgive those who have thus adopted the way of disbelief and rebellion and committed gross injustice and iniquity, and He will not show them any other way than that of Hell, wherein they shall abide for ever: this is not difficult for Allah. 167-169

O people, this Messenger has come to you with the Truth from your Lord, so believe in him, for it will be better for yourselves; but if you disbelieve, you should know that all that is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah,[209] and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.[210] 170

O people of the Book, do not transgress the bounds in your religion,[211] and attribute nothing but the Truth to Allah. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was no more than a Messenger of Allah and His Command[212] that was sent to Mary and a spirit[213] from Allah (that took the shape of a child in the womb of Mary). So believe in Allah and His Messengers,[214] and do not say, "There are 'Three'."[215] Forbear from this: this will be better for you. Allah is only One Deity; He is far above this that He should have a son:[216] all the things in the heavens and in the earth belong to Him,[217] and He alone suffices for their sustenance and protection.[218] 171

The Messiah never disdained to be a servant of Allah nor do the angels who are nearest to Him disdain it. Whoever disdains the service of Allah and prides himself on it, (should know that) He will muster all of them before Him. Then He will give full reward to those who believed and did good deeds and out of His bounty bestow upon them even more than their dues; but He will inflict a painful 172-173

chastisement on those who have disdained His service and prided themselves on it. And there they will find none of those on whom they rely to be their protectors and helpers beside Allah.

174-175 O mankind, a clear proof of the Truth has come to you from your Lord, and We have sent down to you the Light that shows the Way clearly to you. Now those who will accept Allah's Message and seek His protection, Allah will cover them with His mercy and grace and will show them the Right Way to Himself.

176 People[219] seek your verdict on (the inheritance left by) a childless person.[220] Say, "Allah gives His verdict: if a person dies childless and leaves behind a sister,[221] she shall get half of his inheritance: and if the sister dies childless, her brother[222] shall inherit her property: and if the deceased leaves behind two sisters, they shall inherit two thirds of the inheritance:[223] and if the number of the brothers and sisters is more than two, the share of each brother shall be double that of each sister." Allah makes His Commandments plain to you lest you should go astray; Allah has perfect knowledge of everything.

Contd. from p. 403]

knowledge of the truth to a large number of people and left behind them Books of which one or the other has always existed for the guidance of mankind. Now if one goes astray in spite of this arrangement, one cannot throw the blame on Allah and His Messengers. He himself is responsible for this because he did not accept the Truth when it came to him, or the responsibility is of those who had the knowledge of it but did not impart it to others who had gone astray.

209. That is, "You will harm none but yourselves by your disbelief and disobedience, for you can do no harm to the Master of the heavens and the earth."

210. That is, "Your Allah is fully aware of everything: you cannot do mischief with impunity in His Kingdom; He is also Wise: He knows how to deal with those who disobey His Commands."

211. Here "The people of the Book" refers to the Christians who went beyond the bounds in their religion and regarded Jesus as God in their exaggerated reverence and love of him. This was a contrast to the Jews (the other people of the Book) who had gone to the other extreme in their denial of an enmity against Jesus.

212. The Prophet Jesus has specially been called God's "Command" (*Kalimah*) because he was born without the usual agency of a father. God sent a Command that Mary should become pregnant without the semen of a man and she conceived. Although in the very beginning, the Christians were told that Christ had been born without a father by the Command of God, yet they were so misled by the Alexandrian Philosophy of Philo that they first mistook *Kalimah* (Command) for the "Divine Word"; then changed the "Divine Word" into the "Logos"; then they built on the Logos Doctrine which misguided them to the false belief in the divine nature of Jesus Christ. That is how they came to believe that God had revealed Himself or His eternal attribute of speech in the person of Jesus. (See John I : 1, 14).

213. Here Jesus has been called "A spirit from God" and in Al-Baqarah, II : 253, it is stated that God supported him (Jesus) with the "Holy Spirit". In both cases, it means that Allah had bestowed upon the Prophet Jesus a Holy Spirit that was imbued with high moral values and was a perfection of truth and righteousnes without any tinge of evil. The Christians were taught this very thing, but they exaggerated the notion: they took "a spirit from God" for "the Spirit of God" and perverted the meaning of the Holy Ghost into "the Spirit of God Himself" which had entered into Jesus Christ. Thus, a third god, "the Holy Ghost", was created along with God and Christ. This was their second transgression which led the Christians astray.

The perversion of "a spirit from God" into "the Spirit of God" (Holy Ghost) has been made inspite of the fact that according to the Gospel of Matthew, "The angel of the Lord appeared unto him (Joseph) in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost," and not the Holy Ghost (1 : 20).

214. That is, "As Jesus is only a spirit from God and has no part of Godhead in him, do not go beyond the bounds but believe in Allah as One God and accept all His Messengers including the Messiah." This was what the Prophet Jesus himself really taught and this is the truth which a true Christian should believe.

215. The Christians have been rebuked for their wrong belief in the doctrine of the Trinity and advised to refrain from transgression. Strange though it may appear, the fact is that the Christians believe both in the Oneness of God and in the Trinity at one and the same time; for no Christian can deny that according to the clear sayings of Jesus in the Gospels, God is One Being and there is no other god than He. They cannot but admit that Unity of God is the real basis of religion. But the introduction of the doctrine of the Logos at an early stage of Christianity misled them into believing in the Godhead of Christ in union with God and the

Holy Ghost. Since then it has always remained an enigma for them to reconcile these two contradictory doctrines and for the last eighteen hundred years or so the Christian scholars have been vainly engaged in solving this self-created baffling puzzle. Not only this, many Christian denominations have been founded upon different interpretations of this doctrine and it has given rise to many religious disputes in which one denomination accuses the other of blasphemy. In short, their scholars and interpreters have been spending all their efforts and energies in solving this enigma which was neither created by God nor by Christ. It is also obvious that there is no solution to it, because no one can prove that three persons share Godhead and also that God is One Being and has no partners in His Godhead. As this enigma is the result of their own transgression beyond the Divine limits, it can only be solved if they refrain from going beyond the limits and give up the belief of the Godhead of the Messiah and of the Holy Ghost, and acknowledge Allah as the sole object of worship, adoration and devotion and believe in the Messiah as a Messenger of God and not as a partner in the Godhead of Allah.

216. This refutes the fourth transgression of the Christians who believed that Christ was the Son of God. In this belief they had gone beyond the limits of their own religion. According to the first three Books of The New Testament (even if the traditions therein be accepted as authentic), the Prophet Jesus merely likened the relationship between Man and Allah to the relationship between father and son, and used the word father for God metaphorically, just as it was in vogue among the Israelites. There are many instances of this in the Old Testament the Prophet Jesus also used the word "father" in the sense it was used by his people. He called God not only his father but the father of all human beings. But, the Christians again went beyond the limits and declared Jesus to be the only Son of God. They based this strange belief on the assumption that Messiah was the manifestation of God and the incarnation of His Word and His Holy Ghost. They also transgressed in believing that God had sent His only Son to the earth so that he might take the burden of the sins of mankind on his own shoulders and go to his crucifixion and atone for the sins of Man with his own blood. Obviously, this belief is the creation of their own imagination, for there is no saying of Christ to support this.

Here, Allah has not refuted the doctrine of the "Atonement" because it is not a fundamental article of the Christian religion, but is a mere bye-product of (*a*) the belief that Christ is the Son of God and (*b*) a philosophical and mystical explanation of the objection that if Christ was the Son of God, why did he die a cursed death of crucifixion? It is thus obvious that this doctrine is refuted automatically, if it is shown that Christ was not the Son of God and that he did not die on the cross.

217. As all things in the heavens and the earth belong to Allah, none of them has any such relation with Him as of father and son, but only that of Master and slave.

218. Allah suffices for the management of His Kingdom and does not stand in need of the help of a son for this purpose.

219. Verse 176 was sent down long after the revelation of this Surah; so much so that according to some traditions this was the last verse of the Qur'ān. Anyhow, according to most authentic traditions, it was revealed in A.H. 9 when An-Nisā' was already being recited as a complete Sūrah. That is why this verse was not included in the verses about inheritance contained in the first portion of the Sūrah, but was added to it as an appendix.

220. There is a difference of opinion about the meaning of *kalālah*. According to some scholars, *kalālah* is the person who dies childless and whose father and grandfather also are dead. But according to others, *kalālah* is one who dies childless irrespective of whether his father and grandfather are alive or dead. Ḥaḍrat 'Umar also could not come to any definite decision about its meaning till the last. The majority of the jurists, however, have accepted the opinion of Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr that *kalālah* is the person who dies childless and whose father and grandfather had died before his death. This opinion is also supported by the Qur'ān which awards half of the inheritance of the *kalālah* to the sister who cannot be entitled to any share at all if the father is alive.

221. There is a consensus of opinion that this refers to the inheritance of sisters and brothers who have the relation of common parents or only common father with the deceased. Once Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr gave this explanation and none of the Companions differed from it.

222. The brother will inherit the whole inheritance in case there is no other heir to it. For instance, if the husband of the childless woman is alive her brother will be entitled to the whole of the remaining inheritance after the payment of the share of the husband.

223. The same also applies to the case of more than two sisters.



V
AL-MĀ'I DAH
اَلْمَائِدَه

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

V
AL-MĀ'IDAH

اَلمَائِدَہ

INTRODUCTION

Name

This Sūrah takes its name from verse 112 in which the word *mā'idah* occurs. Like the names of many other Sūrahs, this name also has no special relation to the subject of the Sūrah, but has been used merely as a symbol to distinguish it from other Sūrahs.

Period of Revelation.

The contents of the Sūrah indicate, and the traditions support it, that it was revealed after the treaty of Ḥudaibiyah at the end of A. H. 6 or in the beginning of A.H. 7. That is why it deals with the problems that arose from this treaty.

In Dhī-Qa'dah A.H. 6 the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) with 1400 Muslims went to Makkah to perform '*Umrah*, but the Quraish spurred by their enmity, prevented him from its performance, though it was utterly against all the ancient religious traditions of Arabia. After a good deal of hard and harsh negotiations, a treaty was concluded at Ḥudaibiyah according to which it was agreed that he could perform '*Umrah*, the following year. That was a very appropriate occasion for teaching the Muslims the right way of performing a pilgrimage to Makkah with the true Islamic dignity, and enjoining that they should not prevent the disbelievers from performing pilgrimage to Makkah as a retaliation for their misbehaviour. That was not difficult at all as many disbelievers had to pass through Muslim territory on their way to

Makkah. This is why the introductory verses deal with the things connected with pilgrimage to Makkah and the same theme has been resumed in vv. 101-104. The other topics of this Sūrah also appear to belong to the same period.

The continuity of the subject shows that most probably the whole of the Sūrah was revealed as a single discourse at one and the same time. It is also possible that some of its verses were revealed at a later period and inserted in this Sūrah at different places where they fitted in. But there appears to be not the least gap anywhere in the Sūrah to show that it might have comprised two or more discourses.

Occasion of Revelation.

This Sūrah was revealed to suit the requirements of the changed conditions which were now different from those prevailing at the time of the revelation of Sūrahs Āl-'Imrān and An-Nisā'. Then the shock of the set-back at Uḥud had made the very surroundings of Madīnah dangerous for the Muslims, but now Islam had become an invulnerable power and the Islamic State had extended to Najd in the east, to the Red Sea in the west, to Syria in the north and to Makkah in the south. The set-back which the Muslims had suffered at Uḥud had not broken their determination. It had rather spurred them to action. As a result of their continuous struggle and unparalleled sacrifices, the power of the surrounding clans, within a radius of 200 miles or so, had been broken. The Jewish menace which was always threatening Madīnah had been totally removed and the Jews in the other parts of Hijāz had become tributaries of the State of Madīnah. The last effort of the Quraish to suppress Islam had been thwarted in the battle of the Trench. After this, it had become quite obvious to the Arabs that no power could suppress the Islamic Movement. Now Islam was not merely a creed which ruled over the minds and hearts of the people but had also become a State which dominated over every aspect of the life of the people who lived within its boundaries. This had enabled the Muslims to live their lives without let or hindrance, in accordance with their beliefs.

Another development had also taken place during this period. The Muslim civilization had developed in accordance with the principles of Islam and the Islamic viewpoint. This civilization was quite distinct from all other civilizations in all its details, and distinguished the Muslims clearly from the non-Muslims in their moral, social and

cultural behaviour. Mosques had been built in all territories of the Islamic State. The regular system of collective Prayer had been established and Imāms (leaders) for every habitation and clan had been appointed. The Islamic civil and criminal laws had been formulated in detail and were being enforced through the Islamic courts. New and reformed ways of trade and commerce had taken the place of the old ones. The Islamic laws of inheritance, marriage and divorce, of the segregation of the sexes, of the punishment for adultery and calumny and the like had cast the social life of the Muslims into a special mould. Their social behaviour, their conversation, their dress, their very mode of living, their culture etc., had taken a definite shape of its own. As a result of all these changes, the non-Muslims could not expect that the Muslims would ever return to their former fold.

Before the treaty of Ḥudaibiyah, the Muslims were so engaged in their struggle with the non-Muslim Quraish that they got no time to propagate their message. This hindrance was removed by what was apparently a defeat but in reality a victory at Ḥudaibiyah. This gave the Muslims not only peace in their own territory but also respite to spread their message in the surrounding territories. Accordingly, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed letters to the rulers of Iran, Egypt and the Roman Empire and the chiefs of Arabia, inviting them to Islam. At the same time the missionaries of Islam spread among the clans and tribes and invited them to accept the Divine Way of Allah.

These were the circumstances at the time when Al-Mā'idah was revealed.

Topics.

It deals with the following three main topics:

(1) Additional commandments and instructions about the religious, cultural and political life of Muslims.

In this connection, a code of ceremonial rules concerning the journey for Hajj was prescribed; the observance of strict respect for the emblems of Allah was enjoined; and any kind of obstruction or interference with the pilgrims to the Ka'abah was prohibited. Definite rules and regulations were laid down for what is lawful and unlawful in the matter of food, and self-imposed foolish restrictions of the pre-Islamic age were abolished. Permission was given to take food with the

people of the Book and to marry their women. Rules and regulations for the performance of *Wudū* (ablutions), bath and purification and *tayammum* (ablutions with dust) were prescribed. Punishment for rebellion, disturbance of peace and theft were specified. Drinking and gambling were forbidden. Expiation for the breaking of oath was laid down and a few more things were added to the law of evidence.

(2) Admonition to Muslims.

Now that the Muslims had become a ruling body, it was feared that power might corrupt them. At this period of great trial, Allah has admonished them over and over again to stick to justice and to guard against the wrong behaviour of their predecessors, the people of the Book. They have been enjoined to remain steadfast to the Covenant of obedience to Allah and His Messenger, and to observe strictly their commands and prohibitions in order to save themselves from the evil consequences which befell the Jews and the Christians who had violated them. They have been instructed to observe the dictates of the Holy Qur'ān in the conduct of all their affairs and warned against the attitude of hypocrisy.

(3) Admonition to Jews and Christians.

As the power of the Jews had been totally weakened and almost all their settlements in north Arabia had come under the rule of the Muslims, they have been again warned about their wrong attitude and invited to follow the Right Way. At the same time a detailed invitation has also been extended to the Christians. The errors of their creeds have been clearly pointed out and they have been admonished to accept the guidance of the Holy Prophet. Incidentally, it may be noted that no direct invitation has been extended to the Magians and idolaters living in the adjoining countries, because there was no need for a separate address for them as their condition had already been covered by the addresses to the *mushrik* Arabs.

SUMMARY

Subject:

Consolidation of the Islamic Community.

In continuation of the instructions about the consolidation of the Islamic Community given in Surah *An-Nisā,* the Muslims have been directed to observe and fulfil all their obligations: further regulations have been prescribed to train the Muslims for that purpose.

They have also been particularly warned as rulers to guard against the corruption of power and directed to observe the Covenant of the Qur'ān. They have also been exhorted to learn lessons from the failings of their predecessors, the Jews and the Christians, who in their turn have been admonished to give up their wrong attitudes towards the Right Way and accept the guidance taught by Prophet Muḥammad (God's peace be upon him).

Topics and their Interconnection.

The Believers have been exhorted to fulfil scrupulously all of their obligations and follow the regulations prescribed by the Divine Law about food, Sex, Ṣalat, justice, etc. 1-10

The Muslims have been warned to guard against the errors of their predecessors; they should follow the Right Path and avoid the bad example of the Jews and the Christians, who broke their Covenants and went astray into evil ways. They, in their turn, have been admonished to give up their wrong ways and accept Islam. 11-26

The story of the two sons of Adam has been related to reproach the Jews for their plot to kill the Holy Prophet and his Companions. (v.11 & E.N. 30). The story has also been used to emphasize the 27-32

sanctity of human life.

33-40 To achieve this object, punishments have been prescribed for those who create chaos in the Islamic State, and the Believers have been urged to exert their utmost to establish the Right way : the sanctity of property has also been emphasized.

41-50 The Holy Prophet (and through him the Muslims) has been reassured that he should not mind the enmity, the evil designs and the machinations of the Jews, but continue exerting his utmost to establish the Right Way in accordance with the Guidance of the Qur'ān; for nothing better could be expected from these who had forsaken their own Torah. He should deal with the Christians likewise, for they, too, had forsaken their Gospel.

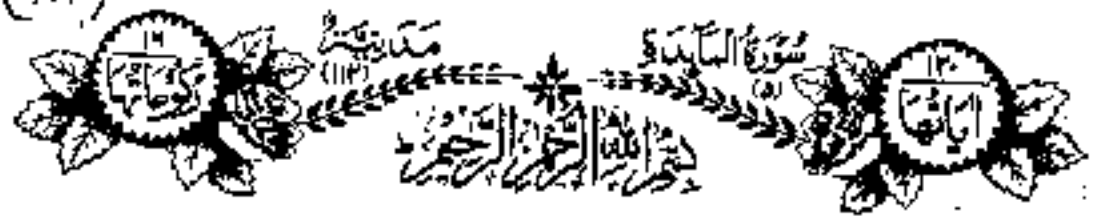
51-69 In view of the degenerate moral condition of the Jews and the Christians, the Believers have been warned not to make them their friends and confidants. Likewise they should be on their guard against the evil designs of the hypocrites, the disbelievers and the like and should rely on the true Believers alone. The people of the Book have, in their turn, been exhorted to give up their enmity and adopt the right attitude, for they cannot get salvation without this.

70-86 The theme of the corruptions of the Jews and Christians has been resumed. The Christians especially have been reproved for their errors in regard to the doctrine of *Tauḥid*. At the same time they have been preferred to the hard-hearted Jews, for there are among them some who are more inclined towards the Truth.

87-108 In this portion of the Sūrah, further regulations about the lawful and the un-lawful, in addition to those contained in vv.1-10, have been given.

109-119 At the end of the Sūrah, the mention of the conversation that will take place between Allah and His Prophets on the Day of Judgement, has been made for the benefit of the erring people to serve as a corrective to their creeds. The conversation with Prophet Christ has been cited as a specimen to warn particularly the Christians, who profess to believe in him, and generally all those people who put false hopes in their Prophets, etc.

Conclusion: "O mankind! The Sovereignty of the heavens and 120
the earth belongs to Allah: therefore you should become His true servants and fear Him, for He has full powers over everything."



يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اَوْفُوْا بِالْعُقُوْدِ ۭ اُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ بَهِيْمَةُ الْاَنْعَامِ
اِلَّا مَا يُتْلٰى عَلَيْكُمْ غَيْرَ مُحِلِّي الصَّيْدِ وَاَنْتُمْ حُرُمٌ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَحْكُمُ
مَا يُرِيْدُ ۝ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تُحِلُّوْا شَعَاۗىِٕرَ اللّٰهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ
وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَاۗىِٕدَ وَلَآ اٰۗمِّيْنَ الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ يَبْتَغُوْنَ فَضْلًا
مِّنْ رَّبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا ۭ وَاِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوْا ۭ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ
قَوْمٍ اَنْ صَدُّوْكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ اَنْ تَعْتَدُوْا ۘ وَتَعَاوَنُوْا عَلَى
الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوٰى ۠ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوْا عَلَى الْاِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۠ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۭ اِنَّ
اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝ حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيْرِ
وَمَآ اُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللّٰهِ بِهٖ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوْذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَ
النَّطِيْحَةُ وَمَآ اَكَلَ السَّبُعُ اِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ ۣ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ
وَاَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوْا بِالْاَزْلَامِ ۭ ذٰلِكُمْ فِسْقٌ ۭ اَلْيَوْمَ يَىِٕسَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا
مِنْ دِيْنِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ ۭ اَلْيَوْمَ اَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِيْنَكُمْ وَ
اَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِيْ وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْاِسْلَامَ دِيْنًا ۭ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ فِيْ
مَخْمَصَةٍ غَيْرَ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِّاِثْمٍ ۙ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ۝ يَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ

V
AL - MĀ'IDAH
اَلْمَآئِدَہ

Verses: 120

Revealed at Madīnah

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

O Believers, observe strictly the prescribed limits.[1] All kinds of cattle-like animals have been made lawful for you[2] except the ones which will be told you here-in-after, but you should not make hunting lawful for yourselves during the state of *iḥrām*[3]: indeed Allah ordains whatever He pleases.[4] 1

O Believers, do not violate the emblems[5] of God-worship. — Do not make lawful for yourselves any of the forbidden months nor catch hold of the animals dedicated to sacrifice nor lay hands on those animals which are collared as a mark of their dedication to God, nor molest the people repairing to the Inviolable Mosque (the Ka'abah), seeking their Lord's bounty and pleasure.[6] You are, however, allowed to hunt after you have put off *iḥrām*.[7] —And be on your guard : let not your resentment against those, who have barred you from visiting the Ka'abah, incite you so much as to transgress the prescribed limits.[8] Nay, cooperate with all in what is good and pious but do not cooperate in what is sinful and wicked. Fear Allah: for Allah is severe in retribution. 2

You are forbidden carrion[9] and blood, the flesh of swine and of that animal which has been slaughtered in any other name than that of Allah,[10] and of the strangled animal, and of that beaten to death or killed by a fall or gored to death or mangled by a beast of prey—save of that you duly slaughtered while it was still alive[11] —and of that which is slaughtered at (un-godly) shrines.[12-13] It is also unlawful for you to try to find your fortune by means of divining devices,[14] for all these things are sinful acts, Today the disbelievers have despaired of (vanquishing) your religion; therefore do not fear them but fear Me.[15] Today I have perfected your religion for you and completed My 3

blessing on you and approved Islam as the way of life for you ,[16] (Therefore observe the limits prescribed by the Law); if, however, one, dying of hunger, eats of any of these forbidden things, provided that he is not inclined towards sin, he will find Allah Forgiving and Compassionate.[17]

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1. The prescribed limit; the limits which are being prescribed for you in this Sūrah and which in general have always been laid down in the Divine Law" After this brief introductory sentence begins the statement of those limits that are to be observed strictly.

2. The Arabic word *an'ām* applies to camel, cow (ox), sheep and goat and *bahīmah* to all kinds of grazing quadrupeds. The combination of the two words has made the meaning more comprehensive by including all the grazing quadrupeds that resemble those four contained in the word *an'ām*. It also implies that the carnivora that kill other animals for food are unlawful. The Holy Prophet made this explicit in a Tradition declaring the carnivora unlawful. Likewise he also declared unlawful those birds that have claws and kill other animals for food or eat dead bodies. According to Ibn 'Abbās, the Holy Prophet prohibited the eating of the flesh of the carnivora and of the birds with claws. Other Traditions from several Companions also support the same.

3. *Ihrām* is the pilgrim's robe which has to be put on at fixed boundaries at the known distances from the Ka'abah. It is not lawful for any pilgrim to proceed to the Ka'abah until he puts off his usual dress and puts on the pilgrim's garb. This consists of two pieces of cloth without seam or ornament, one of which is wrapped round the loins and the other thrown over the shoulders. The instep, heel and head must be bare. This is called the state of *Ihrām* because it makes unlawful even some of the things that are ordinarily lawful. For instance, one should not have a shave or a hair-cut and should not wear other clothes or ornaments nor use perfumes nor indulge in sensual desires and the like. Another restriction is the prohibition against killing any animate object or against hunting or against directing any one else to help hunt an animal. (Please refer also to E.N. 213, Al-Baqarah).

4. This means that Allah has absolute authority to issue any decree He wills, and that the servants have no right at all to question it. Though all His Decrees and Commands are based on wisdom and are full of excellence, yet a Muslim, His servant, does not obey these just because they are proper and conducive to his good, but obeys them because they are commandments from his Sovereign. If He declares anything to be un-lawful, it becomes un-lawful for no other reason than that it has been made unlawful by Him. Likewise if He makes

anything lawful, it becomes lawful for no other reason than that its Owner and the Owner of everything permits His servants to use it. That is why the Qur'ān establishes with full force the fundamental principle that the only basis which makes a thing lawful or unlawful is whether there is the permission of the Owner for its use or not. Likewise there is no other basis for the servant to consider a thing to be lawful or un-lawful except that it is lawful if Allah makes it lawful and un-lawful if He prohibits it.

5. *Sha'ā-ir* is the plural of *shi-'ār* (emblem). Every object or a representation of it, that symbolises a way or a creed or a mode of thought or action or a system is called its *shi'-ār* because it serves as an emblem of it. Official flags,police and army uniforms, coins, currency notes, stamps etc., are the *sha'ā-ir* of governments which demand due respect for these from all under them, and, as far as possible, from others as well. For instance, Temple, Altar, Cross etc., are the *sha'ā-ir* of Christianity. the Hammer and Sickle is the *shi-'ār* of the Communist Party, and the Swastika of the Nazi Party. All of them demand reverence and respect for their emblems from their followers. If anyone shows disrespect for any of the emblems of any system, it is an indication that he has enmity with that system and if the offender belongs to the same system, this act will be tantamount to apostasy and rebellion against it.

The *Sha'ā-ir-Allah* (Emblems of Allah) are those signs and symbols that represent the pure way of God-worship as against the ways of idolatry, unbelief, paganism and atheism. The Muslims are required to show respect to the emblems of Allah wherever they find them in any way or system, provided that their psychological background is purely attributed to God-worship and has not in any way been polluted by any association with idolatry or unbelief. Therefore, if a Muslim comes across anything in the creed and deed of a non-Muslim which has an element of God-worship in it, he will show due respect to that element and to the emblems connected with God-worship. There will be no dispute with the non-Muslims on that account: a dispute arises only when he pollutes God-worship with the worship of others.

In this connection, it should be noted that the command to show due respect to the emblems of Allah was given at a time when the Muslims were at war with the pagan Arabs who were in possession of Makkah. This was necessitated because some of the pagan Arabs had to pass on their way to the Ka'abah through places where the Muslims could strike at them easily. Therefore the Muslims were enjoined not to molest them when they were proceeding to the House of Allah, even though they were idolaters and at war with them. Likewise, the Muslims should not attack them during the months of Ḥajj nor snatch from them those animals, which they were taking to the House of Allah as offering. This is to

ensure that the element of God-worship, which had remained intact in their corrupt religion, should be respected and not violated.

6. Immediately after this Command, a few emblems of Allah have been specially mentioned because there was an imminent danger of their violation by the Muslims owing to the state of war. This does not, however, mean that these emblems alone are to be respected.

7. Incidentally the command about *iḥrām* has been given here because this is also one of the emblems of Allah. Hunting during the state of *iḥrām* is prohibited, because it is the violation of one of the emblems of Allah. But when the restrictions of *iḥrām* come to an end according to the law, one is permitted to hunt, if one desires to do so.

8. This prohibition was laid down to check the Muslims from preventing the pagan Arabs from proceeding to Ḥajj and attacking them when they were passing through their territories. The Muslims had been so enraged when their enemies had prevented them from visiting the Ka'abah and from the performance of Ḥajj in contravention of their old custom that they were prone to retaliate, but Allah warned them not to transgress the bounds.

9. That is, the flesh of the animal that dies a natural death.

10. That is, the flesh of the animal which has been slaughtered in the name of another than Allah or has been slaughtered with the intention of dedicating it to a saint or a god or a goddess etc. (Please also see E.N. 171 of Al-Baqarah).

11. That is, "If an animal falls a victim to any of these accidents but is still alive and is duly slaughtered, it is lawful to eat its flesh". This also implies that the flesh of a clean animal becomes lawful only when it is slaughtered in the prescribed way and that there is no other way of making it lawful. In the prescribed way only that much of the throat is cut that enables the blood to flow out freely. This cannot happen if the whole of the neck is cut off or if the animal is strangled or killed in any other way because in that case most of the blood remains in the body and congeals at different places and sticks to the flesh. But when it is slaughtered in the prescribed way, the whole of the body remains connected with the brain for a sufficiently long time to allow the blood to flow totally out of the body and the flesh is cleansed of the blood which in itself is unlawful. Therefore it is essential that the flesh should be cleansed of blood in order to become lawful.

12. The Arabic word *nusub* applies to all those places which have been specifically dedicated to any saint or god, etc., for making offerings to them or for any other kind of ungodly worship whether there is or is not any sort of stone or wooden idol therein.

13. In this connection, it should be understood well that the limits prescribed by the Law for making eatables lawful or unlawful are not laid down from the point of view of physical health but from the moral and spiritual points of view. As regards the matters concerning physical health, these have been left to man's own judgement and discretion, It is his own business to find out what things are useful or harmful for his physical health and nourishment and the Law does not take any responsibility for his guidance in this respect. Had it done so, poison would have been the first thing to be made unlawful, but there is absolutely no mention of this or other deadly things in the Qur'ān or the Traditions. The Law is only concerned about what is morally or spiritually harmful or beneficial and also about the right or wrong means for obtaining lawful things. It is obvious that man has no means of finding out these things by himself and is consequently liable to commit errors in this matter without the guidance of the law. For whatever has been prohibited, has been prohibited because it is harmful from the point of view of cleanliness or morality or belief. On the contrary, whatever has been made lawful, has been made so because it is free from all these evils.

One might ask why Allah has not explained the philosophy underlying the prohibition of certain things for the clear understanding of the people. This is because it is not possible for mankind to comprehend this. For instance, it is not possible for us to make a research into the nature of moral evils that are produced by eating carrion, blood or the flesh of swine, nor is it easy to find out how they are produced and to what extent, because we have no means of measuring or weighing morality. It is, therefore, obvious that, even if their evil effects had been explained, the position of the sceptic would have remained the same as before for the lack of means of testing their veracity.

This is why Allah has declared the observance of the limits prescribed for the lawful and the unlawful as a matter of belief. One, who believes in the Qur'ān as the book of God and in the Holy Prophet as His Messenger and in Allah as All-Knowing and All-Wise, will observe the prescribed limits whether one understands their philosophy or not. On the other hand, if one does not believe in this basic creed, one will avoid only those things which are harmful according to human knowledge and will go on suffering from the consequences of those which man has not learnt to be harmful.

14. This verse comprises three categories of prohibitions:

(1) It prohibits the pagan ways of taking omens from a god or a goddess and the like, about one's fortune or getting indications as to the future or deciding disputes. For instance, the pagan Quraish of Makkah had specified the idol of Hubal at the Ka'abh for this purpose and kept near it seven divining arrows. They would, after presenting the offering to the priest and performing certain ceremonies, pull out an arrow and regard the words engraved on it as the verdict of Hubal. *[Contd. on p. 427*

مَاذَآ اُحِلَّ لَهُمْ ؕ قُلْ اُحِلَّ لَكُمُ الطَّيِّبٰتُ ۙ وَمَا عَلَّمْتُمْ مِّنَ الْجَوَارِحِ
مُكَلِّبِيْنَ تُعَلِّمُوْنَهُنَّ مِمَّا عَلَّمَكُمُ اللّٰهُ ۫ فَكُلُوْا مِمَّآ اَمْسَكْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَاذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْهِ ۠ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَرِيْعُ الْحِسَابِ ۝
اَلْيَوْمَ اُحِلَّ لَكُمُ الطَّيِّبٰتُ ؕ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ حِلٌّ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَ
طَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ ۫ وَالْمُحْصَنٰتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ وَالْمُحْصَنٰتُ مِنَ
الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ اِذَآ اٰتَيْتُمُوْهُنَّ اُجُوْرَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِيْنَ
غَيْرَ مُسٰفِحِيْنَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِيْٓ اَخْدَانٍ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّكْفُرْ بِالْاِيْمَانِ فَقَدْ
حَبِطَ عَمَلُهٗ ۫ وَهُوَ فِى الْاٰخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ۝ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا
اِذَا قُمْتُمْ اِلَى الصَّلٰوةِ فَاغْسِلُوْا وُجُوْهَكُمْ وَاَيْدِيَكُمْ اِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ
وَامْسَحُوْا بِرُءُوْسِكُمْ وَاَرْجُلَكُمْ اِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ ؕ وَاِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوْا ؕ
وَاِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَّرْضٰٓى اَوْ عَلٰى سَفَرٍ اَوْ جَآءَ اَحَدٌ مِّنْكُمْ مِّنَ الْغَآئِطِ اَوْ
لٰمَسْتُمُ النِّسَآءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوْا مَآءً فَتَيَمَّمُوْا صَعِيْدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوْا
بِوُجُوْهِكُمْ وَاَيْدِيْكُمْ مِّنْهُ ؕ مَا يُرِيْدُ اللّٰهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنْ حَرَجٍ
وَّلٰكِنْ يُّرِيْدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهٗ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ۝
وَاذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَةَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمِيْثَاقَهُ الَّذِىْ وَاثَقَكُمْ بِهٖٓ ۙ اِذْ قُلْتُمْ
سَمِعْنَا وَاَطَعْنَا ۫ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ۝ يٰٓاَيُّهَا
الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُوْنُوْا قَوّٰمِيْنَ لِلّٰهِ شُهَدَآءَ بِالْقِسْطِ ۫ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ
قَوْمٍ عَلٰٓى اَلَّا تَعْدِلُوْا ؕ اِعْدِلُوْا ۟ هُوَ اَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوٰى ۫ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ
خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝ وَعَدَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ ۙ لَهُمْ

They ask you what has been made lawful for them. Say, "All 4
the good and pure things have been made lawful for you.[18] You may
also eat of what the hunting animals, which you have trained to hunt
in accordance with the knowledge Allah has given you, catch and hold
for you;[19] you should, however, mention Allah's name over it,[20] and
fear to violate the Law of Allah. for Allah is swift at reckoning."

All the good and pure things have today been made lawful for 5
you; the food of the people of the Book is lawful for you, and your
food for them,[21] Likewise you are permitted to marry chaste believing
women or chaste women from among the people who were given the
Scripture before you,[22] provided that you give them their dowries and
become their protectors in wedlock; this permission is not for sensual
license or secret illicit relations; whoever rejects the way of Faith, all
the deeds of his life shall become vain and he shall be a bankrupt in
the Hereafter.[23]

O Believers, when you rise to offer the *Ṣalāt,* you must wash 6
your faces and hands and arms up to the elbows and wipe your heads
with wet hands and wash your feet up to the ankles;[24] and if you have
become unclean, cleanse yourselves with a full bath;[25] if, however,
you are sick or are on a journey, or if any of you has relieved himself
or if you have "touched" women and you can find no water, then
cleanse yourselves with pure dust: strike your palms on it and wipe
your hands and faces with it.[26] Allah does not will to make life hard
for you, but He wills to purify you and complete His blessing upon
you[27] so that you may show gratitude.

Keep in mind the blessing Allah has bestowed upon you and do 7-8
not forget the solemn covenant which He made with you (and which
you confirmed), when you said, "We have heard and submitted," Fear
Allah for Allah knows the very secrets of the hearts. O Believers, be
steadfast in righteousness and just in giving witnesses for the sake of
Allah;[29] the enmity of any people should not so provoke you as to turn
you away from justice. Do justice for it is akin to piety. Fear Allah (in
your affairs): indeed He is fully aware of what you do.

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(2) The second category consists of the superstitious ways and irrational methods of taking decisions about the daily problems of life for anything

regarded as portending good or evil regardless of reason or knowledge, or of finding out future events blindly by the ominous significance of particular things, circumstances, occurrences or proceedings or the like. In short, it included all the so-called arts of prediction and prophetic significance.

(3) The third category includes all kinds of gambling in which the distribution of things etc., is based on mere chance and not on merit, right, service or other rational considerations. For instance, all the schemes of lottery which entitle a certain holder of a ticket to a prize merely on chance, and at the expense of a large number of other holders of such tickets, or the award of prizes for cross-word puzzles in which a certain answer out of a large number of correct ones corresponds, by mere chance, to the answer that has been ear-marked as correct for the purpose — all these things are unlawful.

However, one simple form of casting lots is lawful in Islam, when there are two equally lawful things or rights and there is no rational method of deciding between them. Supposing two persons have equal rights, in every respect, to something and the judge finds no rational justification to give preference to either of the disputants, neither of whom is willing to forgo his rights. In such a case, if they mutually agree, the matter may be decided by casting lots, or if one has to choose one of the two lawful things and is in difficulty in regard to the choice, one is allowed to cast lots for it. The Holy Prophet adopted this method on such occasions as required a choice to be made between two persons with equal rights, whenever he thought that if he himself decided in favour of one, the other might be grieved.

15. "Today" does not mean a particular day or date but the time when this verse was revealed.

"The disbelievers have despaired of your religion" means: "After a long systematic resistance and opposition, they have lost hope of defeating your religion. Now they do not expect that you will ever return to the former way of "ignorance" because your religion has become a permanent way of life and has been established on a firm footing. Therefore, "Do not fear them but fear *Me*." That is, there is no longer any danger of interference from the disbelievers that they will prevent you from the performance of your religious obligations. You should, therefore, fear God and observe His commands and instructions because no ground for fear has been left for you. Now your disobedience of the Law will mean that you do not intend to obey Allah."

16. "I have perfected your religion" means: "I have provided it with all the essential elements of a permanent way of life which comprises a complete

system of thought and practice and civilization and have laid down principles and given detailed instructions for the solution of all human problems. Hence there is no need for you to seek guidance and instructions from any other source."

The completion of "the blessing" is the completion of the blessing of guidance.

"I have approved Islam as the way of life for you" because you have practically proved by your obedience and devotion to it that you sincerely believe in Islam which you have accepted. As I have practically set you free from every kind of subjection and servitude there is no compulsion for you to submit to any other than Me in your practical life." It also implies, "As a gratitude for these blessings of Mine, you should show no negligence in the observance of the prescribed limits."

Authentic traditions show that this declaration was revealed on the occasion of the last Ḥajj performed by the Holy Prophet in A.H. 10. I am however of the opinion that it was at first revealed in A.H. 6 close after the treaty of Ḥudaibiyah as a part of this discourse, but was again sent down to the Holy Prophet for its declaration on that suitable occasion. This is because this verse is so well knit in this context that it would be incomplete without it, Therefore it cannot be imagined that it was inserted here afterwards when it was revealed in A.H. 10. I believe (and the real knowledge is with Allah) that at the time of its revelation in this context its real significance was not realized, therefore in A.H. 10, when the whole of Arabia was subdued and the power of Islam reached its zenith, Allah again sent down these sentences to His Prophet for their declaration on the occasion of his last Ḥajj.

17. Please refer to E.N. 172 of Al-Baqarah.

18. A subtle point is hidden in this answer. It is meant to set right the doubting attitude of some "religious persons," who regard everything as unlawful unless it is explicitly declared to be lawful. There was a need to remove this doubt because it makes people very fastidious. So much so that such people begin to demand a complete list of lawful things in every sphere of life and look at everything with a doubting attitude. Those who asked the question did so with the intention of obtaining a detailed list of the lawful things so that they might consider all other things as unlawful. However, the Qur'ān did the opposite of it and gave a detailed list of the forbidden things and made all other good things lawful. This was a great reform, for it set human life free from many bondages and opened wide the doors of the vast world for mankind. Before its revelation only a limited number of things were lawful and the remaining vast world was unlawful, but this verse declared a limited number of things unlawful and made the remaining vast world lawful.

"Lawful" has been qualified with "pure" so that impure things might not be made lawful just because they have not been included in the list of prohibition. As regards the criterion for judging whether a thing is pure or not, it should be noted that all those things are pure which are not unclean according to any principle of the Islamic Law, or which are not offensive to good taste or have not universally been regarded as repugnant by cultured people.

19. Hunting animals are dogs, leopards, falcons, hawks and other beasts and birds of prey which are trained to chase wild animals and catch them for their masters, without mangling them. The game of the trained hunting animals is lawful because they do not mangle it and that of the untrained beasts and birds of prey is unlawful because they mangle it.

There is, however, a difference of opinion among the jurists about this matter. Imām Shāfi'ī and those of his school of thought are of the opinion that if the hunting beast or bird eats a part of what it catches, it becomes unlawful, for this means that the animal had caught the game for itself and not for its master. Imām Mālik and those of his school of thought are of the opinion that if the hunting bird or beast eats less than one-third of the game, the remaining two-thirds or so is lawful for the master. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and those of his school of thought are of the opinion that if the hunting beast eats a part of what it catches, the remaining game will become unlawful, but if the hunting bird eats a part of it the remaining game will not become unlawful because the hunting beast can be trained to catch and hold the game for its master without eating anything of it, but the hunting bird cannot be so trained. In contrast to these views, Ḥaḍrat 'Alī is of the opinion that the game of the hunting bird is absolutely unlawful, because it cannot be trained to catch and hold the game for its master without eating something of it.

20. That is one should recite *bismillah* ("In the name of Allah,"), when letting loose the hunting animal for game. According to a Tradition, 'Adī-bin-Ḥātim asked the Holy Prophet whether he could hunt a game with a hunting dog. The Holy Prophet replied, "You may eat of the game if you recited the name of Allah at the time of letting loose the hunting dog, provided that he did not eat of it. In the other case you should not eat it because that would mean that the dog had actually caught it for himself." Then 'Adī-bin-Ḥātim further asked, "If I let loose my own dog, on the game but afterwards find another dog there, what should I do in that case?" The Holy Prophet replied, "Do not eat it because you mentioned the name of Allah in relation to your own dog and not the other dog."

The verse enjoins that the name of Allah must be mentioned at the time of letting loose the hunting animal in order to make the game lawful. If, however, the hunted animal is found alive, it should be duly slaughtered in the name of Allah,

But in case it is not found alive, it will be lawful if the name of Allah was mentioned at the time of letting loose the hunting animal. The same also applies to hunting with arrows.

21. "The food of the People of the Book" also includes what has been slaughtered by them.

"The food of the People of the Book is lawful for you and your food for them" means that there are no restrictions either on us or on them to take food together. The Muslims are permitted to take meals with the People of the Book and they with the Muslims. But the repetition of the sentence "all good and pure things have been made lawful for you" is very significant. It shows that the Muslims should not partake of their food, if the people of the Book do not observe those rules which are essential from the point of view of the Islamic Law, or if they include unlawful things in their food and drink. For instance, if they do not mention the name of Allah over the animal they slaughter or mention any other name than that of Allah over it, the flesh would be forbidden for the Muslims. Likewise if liquor or pork or any other forbidden things is served, the Muslims are not permitted to sit at the same table with them.

The same rule also applies to the food and drink of other non-Muslims except that the Muslims are not permitted at all to eat the flesh of the animals slaughtered by non-Muslims. They are permitted to eat the flesh of the clean animals, slaughtered by the People of the Book only, if they duly pronounced the name of Allah over it.

22. This refers to the Jews and the Christians. Permission to marry only their women has been given, and that, too, with the provision that they should be chaste (*muḥṣanāt*). There is a difference of opinion in the details of the application of this permission. According to Ibn 'Abbās, a Muslim may marry from among the women of the People of the Book who are the subjects of the Islamic State, but is not permitted to marry from among the women of the People of the Book living in the regions which are at war with the Islamic State or are living in a territory of the unbelievers. The Ḥanafīs differ a little from this and consider it undesirable, though not unlawful, to marry women from among the People of the Book living in a foreign territory. On the contrary, Sa'īd bin Musayyib and Ḥasan Baṣrī are of the opinion that the Command is of a general nature; therefore there is no need to make any kind of distinction between the People of the Book whether they are subjects of an Islamic State or living in a foreign territory.

Besides this there also is a difference in the interpretations of the word *muḥṣanāt*. According to Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, it refers to virtuous and chaste women.

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مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَّ اَجْرٌ عَظِيْمٌ ۝9 وَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَآ اُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ
الْجَحِيْمِ ۝10 يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ اِذْ هَمَّ قَوْمٌ
اَنْ يَّبْسُطُوْٓا اِلَيْكُمْ اَيْدِيَهُمْ فَكَفَّ اَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ ۚ وَ اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۭ وَ عَلَى
اللّٰهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝11 وَ لَقَدْ اَخَذَ اللّٰهُ مِيْثَاقَ بَنِيْٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ ۚ
وَ بَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ نَقِيْبًا ۭ وَ قَالَ اللّٰهُ اِنِّيْ مَعَكُمْ ۭ لَئِنْ اَقَمْتُمُ
الصَّلٰوةَ وَ اٰتَيْتُمُ الزَّكٰوةَ وَ اٰمَنْتُمْ بِرُسُلِيْ وَ عَزَّرْتُمُوْهُمْ وَ اَقْرَضْتُمُ
اللّٰهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا لَّاُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّاٰتِكُمْ وَ لَاُدْخِلَنَّكُمْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ ۚ فَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَآءَ
السَّبِيْلِ ۝12 فَبِمَا نَقْضِهِمْ مِّيْثَاقَهُمْ لَعَنّٰهُمْ وَ جَعَلْنَا قُلُوْبَهُمْ قٰسِيَةً ۚ
يُحَرِّفُوْنَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَّوَاضِعِهٖ ۙ وَ نَسُوْا حَظًّا مِّمَّا ذُكِّرُوْا بِهٖ ۚ وَ لَا تَزَالُ
تَطَّلِعُ عَلٰى خَآئِنَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا مِّنْهُمْ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَ اصْفَحْ ۭ اِنَّ
اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ۝13 وَ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّا نَصٰرٰٓى اَخَذْنَا مِيْثَاقَهُمْ
فَنَسُوْا حَظًّا مِّمَّا ذُكِّرُوْا بِهٖ ۠ فَاَغْرَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَ الْبَغْضَآءَ اِلٰى
يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۭ وَ سَوْفَ يُنَبِّئُهُمُ اللّٰهُ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَصْنَعُوْنَ ۝14 يٰٓاَهْلَ
الْكِتٰبِ قَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُوْلُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيْرًا مِّمَّا كُنْتُمْ تُخْفُوْنَ مِنَ
الْكِتٰبِ وَ يَعْفُوْا عَنْ كَثِيْرٍ ۭ قَدْ جَآءَكُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ نُوْرٌ وَّ كِتٰبٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ۝15
يَّهْدِيْ بِهِ اللّٰهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَهٗ سُبُلَ السَّلٰمِ وَ يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِّنَ
الظُّلُمٰتِ اِلَى النُّوْرِ بِاِذْنِهٖ وَ يَهْدِيْهِمْ اِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ۝16 لَقَدْ كَفَرَ
الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيْحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۭ قُلْ فَمَنْ يَّمْلِكُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ

Allah has promised that He will pardon the errors of those who believe and do good deeds, and will give them a rich reward. As for those who disbelieve and treat the Revelations of Allah as false, they shall go to Hell. 9-10

O Believers, recall to mind the favour which Allah has (recently) shown to you: when some people intended to do harm to you, Allah restrained their hands from you.[30] Fear Allah in whatever you do for the Believers should put their trust in Allah alone. 11

Allah had bound the Israelites by a solemn covenant, and appointed twelve supervisors[31] from among them and said, "I am with you; if you establish the *Ṣalat*, pay the *Zakāt* and believe in My Messengers, and support them and give a generous loan to Allah,[33] I shall surely wipe out your evils from you,[34] and admit you into gardens under which canals flow, But after this whoever from among you adopted the way of disbelief, has indeed gone astray from the Right Way."[35] Then they broke their covenant and because of this We deprived them of Our mercy and hardened their hearts. Now they have become so degenerate that they distort the words of the Scriptures so as to change their meanings completely: moreover, they have forgotten the major portion of the teachings given to them and every now and then you find out one act or the other of their dishonesty. There are only a few of them who are free from this vice: (so whatever mischief they do is to be expected of them). Yet pardon them and connive at what they are doing: Allah likes those who show generosity in their dealings. 12-13

Likewise We bound by a covenant those people, who said, "We are *Naṣāra*."[36] But they too, forgot much of what had been taught to them. So We sowed among them seeds of discord, enmity and hatred that shall last up to the Day of Resurrection, and surely the time will come when Allah will tell them of what they had been contriving in the world. 14

O People of the Book, Our Messenger has come to you; he makes manifest to you many things of the Book which you were concealing, and passes over many others.[37] Light has come to you from Allah and the Book which guides to the Truth, whereby Allah leads to the paths of peace[38] those who seek His pleasure and brings 15-16

them out of the depths of darkness into the Light by His grace and guides them towards the Right Way.

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That is why he excludes characterless women of the People of the Book from this permission. Ḥasan, Shā'bī and Ibrahīm Nakha'ī are of the same opinion and the Ḥanafīs also approve of this. On the other side, Imām Shāfi'i takes it to mean free women of the people of the Book as opposed to the slave-girls from among them.

23. The warning that immediately follows the permission given to marry women from among the People of the Book is very significant. The Muslim who makes use of this permission has been warned to guard his faith and morality very cautiously against the influence of his unbelieving wife. There is a genuine danger that his deep love might render him a prey to wrong creeds and acts of his unbelieving wife and he might lose both his Faith and morality, or he might adopt a wrong moral and social attitude which might be against the spirit of his faith.

24. According to the practice and instructions of the Holy Prophet, washing of the face includes the inside washing and cleaning of the mouth, throat and nose. It is also essential to wipe the ears from outside and inside as they form part of the head. The hands should be cleansed first because the other parts are to be cleansed with them.

25. A full bath is essential in case one becomes "unclean" by cohabitation or by a discharge of semen during sleep etc. It is forbidden to touch the Qur'ān or to offer the Prayer while one is "unclean". (For further details please refer to E.N.'s 67, 68, 69 of An-Nisā).

26. Please refer to E.N.'s 69 and 70 of An-Nisā.

27. Cleanliness of the body is a blessing like the purity of the soul. The blessing of Allah becomes complete only when one gets full guidance for the purity of both the body and the soul.

28. The blessing is that Allah has made the right way of life clear for the Muslims and appointed them to the high position of the leadership of the world to guide it on the straight path.

29. Please refer to E.N.'s 164 and 165 of An-Nisā.

30. This refers to the incident that has been related by Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās. Some Jews plotted to kill the Holy Prophet and some of his eminent Companions in order to give a crushing blow to Islam. Accordingly, they invited him to a dinner. But right in time the Holy Prophet by the grace of God came to know of the plot and did not go to the dinner. This incident has been mentioned

here by way of introduction, as the address onward is directed towards the Israelites.

The address, which begins from here, has two objects. First, it is meant to warn the Muslims to guard against the attitude which the Jews and the Christians had adopted towards the covenant they had made with God: they had broken the covenant and swerved into wrong and evil ways. Second, it warns the Jews and the Christians of their error and invites them to the Right Way.

31. The Arabic word *naqīb* means one who guards and keeps a protecting and restraining watch. Allah commanded Moses to appoint twelve supervisors one each from the twelve tribes of Israel to keep watch over their affairs in order to protect them from irreligious and immoral ways. The Bible mentions twelve "princes of the tribes of their fathers" (Numbers, 1:16) as "heads of thousands in Israel" but not as supervisors of religion and morality as is implied in the word *naqīb*.

32. That is, "If you accept the invitation of the Messengers who come from Me and help them in their mission....."

33. "..... a good loan to God" is the money spent in His Way. Such money has been called a good loan in the Qur'ān at several places and Allah has very graciously promised to return every farthing of the loan after increasing it manifold, provided that it is a "good loan" which has been lawfully earned and spent in accordance with the Divine Law with good intentions.

34. Allah "wipes out" evils in two ways: (1) When a person adopts the Right Way and follows the Divine Guidance in thought and action, his soul begins to purify itself and his life begins to be clean of many evils. (2) But if, inspite of this, he does not attain to the high rank of perfection as a whole, and still has some evils left in him, Allah, by the exercise of His grace, will not take him to task and will "wipe out" these from his account. This is because Allah is not hard and strict in taking account of minor evils, provided that the person sincerely accepts the fundamental Guidance and begins to reform himself accordingly.

35. The significance of "..... he has indeed gone astray from the Right Way" is that at first he found the Right Way and then lost it and strayed into paths of ruin.

"The Right Way" does not fully express the meaning of *"sawā-'as-sabīl"*. It is that way of life which enables a man to develop harmoniously all his powers, faculties, and abilities: which satisfies all his cravings, urges and feelings and the demands of his body and soul in a congenial manner: which guides him rightly to keep balanced the multifold complex relations with other human beings: which leads him individually and collectively to exploit and use equitably the natural

resources for his own good and that of humanity. In short, it is that way of life which enables the individual and the society to solve spiritual, moral, social, physical, economic, political and international problems in a straight, smooth, even and just manner.

It is obvious that man with his limited powers and intellect cannot by himself solve these problems, as he is simply incapable of comprehending at one and the same time all the aspects of human problems so as to weigh and estimate their relative importance and judge between the different courses before him. That is why, whenever he has tried to plan a way of life for himself, he has utterly failed to do justice to his own self or his society, and made a mess of all his affairs and problems, and created a state of chaos everywhere. This is because with his narrow vision he becomes so absorbed in one basic need out of many and one problem out of many that he loses sight of all others and neglects them intentionally or un-intentionally. As a result of this, life loses its balance and begins to rush towards one extreme. When this state of affairs becomes unbearable, one of the neglected needs or problems takes hold of man and life begins to rush towards another extreme with the same destructive result. In this way, life goes on running from one extreme to the other and man never finds the balanced middle way which is "The Right Way", because all the ways planned by him keep him running in wrong directions from one extreme to the other.

As has been pointed out, man cannot plan that right way which may lead him clear of the pitfalls of the myriad wrong and crooked ways; so Allah has very graciously made arrangements for showing the Right Way to mankind. He sent His Messengers with Guidance to lead mankind to the Right Way to real success in this world and in the Hereafter; and the one who loses this way will go wrong here and act wrongly, and inevitably go to Hell in the next world, for all the wrong ways lead to Hell.

In this connection it will be pertinent to point out the blunder that has been committed by some so-called philosophers. When they noticed that human life was continually running between two extremes, they came to the wrong conclusion that the Dialectical process was the natural way of the evolution of human progress. According to them, internal contradictions are inherent in all things and the struggle between these opposites and their synthesis constitutes the contents of the process of development. They apply the Dialectical methods to the study of social life and come to the wrong conclusion that the same is the right way of evolution. Accordingly they start with a thesis of an extreme nature for the solution of a problem and go on rushing away from the Right Way towards one extreme till they discover, to their dismay, that in this process gross injustice has been done to some other equally important problems. Then they turn back with the antithesis of the

first theory and presume that the synthesis of the two will help evolve its right solution. Though it is true that the struggle between the two opposite theories helps them approach the Right Way, yet they cross it rapidly towards the other extreme because they do not believe in Divine Guidance which alone can make one firmly adhere to it. Then they do gross justice to some other problems and the same process is repeated over and over again. If such short-sighted philosophers had not rejected God and religion and made an impartial study of the Qur'ān, they would have discovered to their joy that the Right Way is the straight path, leading to the human evolution, and not the myriad crooked and curved paths. Thus they would have saved mankind from continually rushing aimlessly between extremes. (Adapted).

36. It is wrong to presume that the title *Nasārā* pertains to Nazareth, the home of Jesus. In fact, its root is *nusrat* (help). The Christians have been called *Naṣārā* (helpers) for the reason that when Jesus asked, "Who will be my *anṣār* (helpers) in the cause of Allah?" his disciples answered, "We are *anṣār* in the cause of Allah." (LXI : 14). The Christian writers got the wrong impression that the Qur'ān contemptuously calls the Christians *Nasārā* because of the apparent similarity between *Naṣārā* and Nazarenes, a sect of early Christians who were contemptuously called Nazarites. But the Qur'ān makes it clear here that the Christians themselves said, "We are *Naṣārā*." It is obvious that the Christians never called themselves Nazarites.

In this connection, it may be noted that Jesus Christ never called his disciples "Christians" or "Messiahites," for he had not come to found a new religion after his own name but to revive the same religion that Moses and the other Prophets before and after him had brought. Therefore he did not form any new community other than that of the Israelites; nor they lived like a new one; nor adopted a distinctive name or symbol for themselves. They used to go to the Temple (Jerusalem) for prayer along with the other Jews and considered themselves to be bound by the Mosaic Law. (Please refer to the Acts, 3: 1, 10: 14,15: 1 & 5, 21: 22).

Later on the process of separation began from two sides. On the one side St. Paul, a follower of the Prophet Jesus, put an end to the observance of the law and declared that the only thing needed for salvation was belief in Messiah. On the other side, the Jewish rabbis cut off the followers of Christ by declaring them to be a misguided sect. But inspite of this separatedness, at first the sect bore no distinctive name. The followers of Christ called themselves by different names, such as disciples, brethren, believers, saints etc. (Please refer to the Acts, 2 : 44, 4: 32, 9 : 26, 11 : 29, 13 : 52, 15 : 1 & 23; Romans, 15 : 45, and Corinthians, 1:

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شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ الْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
جَمِيعًا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۚ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ
وَاللَّهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٧﴾ وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ وَالنَّصٰرٰى نَحْنُ أَبْنٰٓؤُا
اللَّهِ وَأَحِبَّٰٓؤُهُ ۚ قُلْ فَلِمَ يُعَذِّبُكُمْ بِذُنُوبِكُمْ ۚ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ ۚ
يَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٨﴾ يَٰٓأَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ
لَكُمْ عَلٰى فَتْرَةٍ مِّنَ الرُّسُلِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا جَاءَنَا مِنْ بَشِيرٍ وَلَا نَذِيرٍ ۖ
فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَشِيرٌ وَنَذِيرٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ
مُوسٰى لِقَوْمِهِ يٰقَوْمِ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَعَلَ فِيكُمْ أَنْبِيَاءَ
وَجَعَلَكُمْ مُّلُوكًا ۖ وَآتٰىكُمْ مَّا لَمْ يُؤْتِ أَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ يٰقَوْمِ
ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا عَلٰٓى أَدْبَارِكُمْ
فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خٰسِرِينَ ﴿٢١﴾ قَالُوا يٰمُوسٰٓى إِنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمًا جَبَّارِينَ ۖ وَإِنَّا لَنْ
نَّدْخُلَهَا حَتّٰى يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا ۖ فَإِنْ يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِنَّا دٰخِلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ قَالَ
رَجُلَانِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمَا ادْخُلُوا عَلَيْهِمُ الْبَابَ ۚ
فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُمُوهُ فَإِنَّكُمْ غٰلِبُونَ ۚ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوٓا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾
قَالُوا يٰمُوسٰٓى إِنَّا لَنْ نَّدْخُلَهَآ أَبَدًا مَّا دَامُوا فِيهَا فَاذْهَبْ أَنْتَ وَرَبُّكَ
فَقٰتِلَآ إِنَّا هٰهُنَا قٰعِدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لَآ أَمْلِكُ إِلَّا نَفْسِي وَ
أَخِي فَافْرُقْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ الْفٰسِقِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾ قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا مُحَرَّمَةٌ
عَلَيْهِمْ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً ۚ يَتِيهُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ

Indeed they committed blasphemy, who said, "The Messiah, son of Mary, is verily God."[39] O Muhammad, say to them, "If Allah chose to destroy the Messiah, Mary's son, and his mother, and all the dwellers of the earth, who has the power to prevent Him from this? For, to Allah belongs the Kingdom of the earth and the heavens and all that is between them: He creates whatever He wills[40] and has power over everything." 17

The Jews and the Christians say, "We are the sons of Allah and His beloved ones." Ask them, "Why then does He punish you for your sins? In fact, you are also human beings like the other human beings He has created. He forgives whomever He wills and punishes whomever He wills. To Allah belongs the Kingdom of the earth and the heavens, and all that is in it and all shall return to Him." 18

O People of the Book, this Messenger of Ours has come to you and is making clear to you the teachings of the Right Way after a long interval during which there had come no Messengers, lest you should say, "No bearer of good news nor warner came to us. Lo, now the bearer of the good news and warner has come.— And Allah has power over everything."[41] 19

Call to mind the time when Moses said to his people, "O my people, remember the favour which Allah bestowed upon you. He raised up Prophets from among you and made you rulers and gave you that which had not been given to anyone in the world.[42] O my people, enter the Holy Land that Allah has destined for you,[43] and, do not turn your backs or you will turn about losers,"[44] They replied, "O Moses, in that land dwell mighty people; therefore we are never going to enter it till they leave it; if, however, they leave it we are ready to enter it." Among those, who were filled with fear, there were two persons[45] whom Allah had blessed with His favour: they said, "Make your way into the gate against those mighty people; when you enter it, you will surely be victorious. Trust in Allah, if you are true believers." But even then they replied, "O Moses, we are never going to enter it so long as they remain therein. Therefore, go, both you and your Lord, and fight: we will stay here," At this Moses cried. "My Lord, I have no power over anyone but myself and my brother: so set us apart from these disobedient people." Allah replied, "Very well, they are forbidden this land for forty years, during which period they shall 20-26

wander homeless on the earth[46]: so do not grieve at all for these disobedient people.[47]

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12). But the Jews called them Galileans or the sect of the Nazarenes contemptuously and tauntingly (Luke, 13 : 2, The Acts, 24 : 5) because of the Roman Province of Galilee in which Nazareth, the birth place of Jesus, was situated. These satirical names, however, did not become current as the permanent names of the followers of Christ.

As a matter of fact, the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch, when Barnabas and Paul went there in 43-44 A.D. to preach the Gospels. (The Acts, 11: 26). Though this name was also given to them contemptuously by their enemies, yet, by and by, their leaders accepted this, saying, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye,.....if any man suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed." (I Peter, 4: 16). At long last, they lost the feelings that the name "Christian" was a bad title that had been given to them by their enemies.

Thus it is clear that the Qur'ān has not called them Christians because of the contempt associated with it, but has called them *Anṣār* (helpers) in order to remind them that they were the name-sake of those disciples of Jesus who had responded to his invitation and said, "We are helpers of Allah." Is it not an irony that instead of being grateful to the Qur'ān for giving them their name, the Christian missionaries of today should bear a grievance against it for not calling them "Christians"?

37. That is, "He makes known many things which you were dishonestly keeping back from the Scripture, for these are essential for the establishment of the true Faith, but disregards many other such things for there is no real need to disclose them."

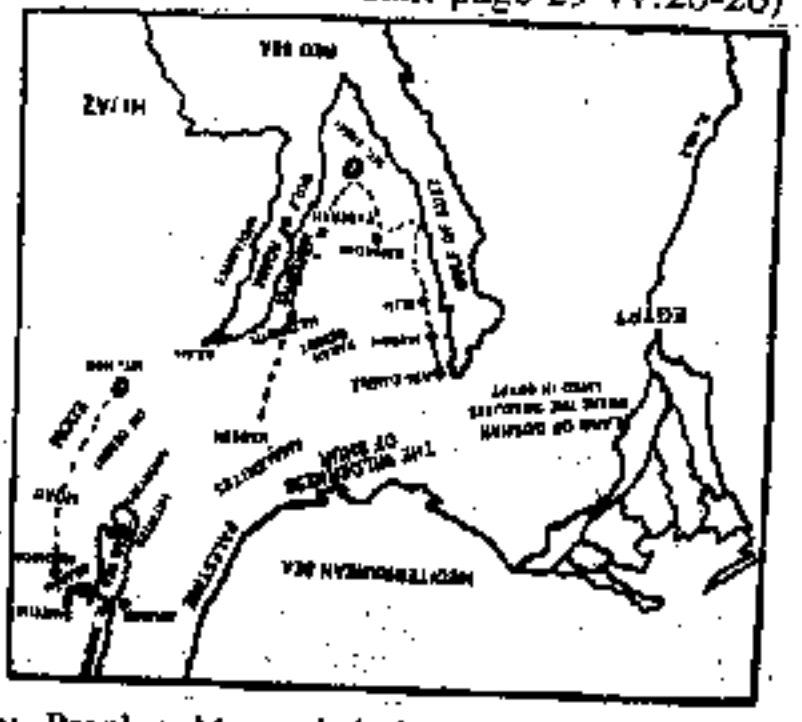
38. "Allah leads to the paths of peace" those who intend to walk in the Light of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet. They remain safe from wrong notions, wrong thoughts and wrong acts and their consequences, because at every cross-road they come to know the safe way with the help of that light.

39. The Christians were guilty of blasphemy in regarding Jesus as God and worshipping him as such. This was the result of the error they committed in regarding Jesus as the union of man and God, for it made his personality an enigma, which their scholars have not been able to solve inspite of their verbosity and argumentations. The more they tried to solve it the more complicated it became. Those who were impressed by the human aspect of this complex

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Map showing the places that the Israelites visited during their homeless wanderings in the Sinai Peninsula after their Exodus from Egypt:

(Sūrah Al-Mā'idah, page 29-vv.20-26)



Explanation: Prophet Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt and brought them to Mount Sinai by the way of Marah, Elim and Rephidim in the Sinai Peninsula. Here he stayed for a little over a year and received most of the Commandments of the Torah. then he was commanded to lead the Israelites towards Palestine and conquer it, for that land was to be given to them as an inheritance. So, he led them through Taberah and Hazeroth and came to the desert of Paran from where he despatched a deputation of the prominent Israelites to spy out Palestine. The deputation returned after forty days and made their report at Kadesh. Except for the encouraging picture presented by Joshua and Caleb, the report made by the other members was so disappointing that the Israelites cried out in disgust and refused to march on to Palestine. Thereupon Allah decreed that they would wander about for forty years in the wilderness and none of their older generation except Joshua and Caleb would see Palestine. Thus, the Israelites wandered homeless in the wilderness of Paran, Shur and Zin, fighting and struggling against the Amalekites, the Amorites, the Edomites, the Midianites and the Moabites. When the period of forty years was coming to an end, Prophet Aaron died in Mount Hor, near the border of Edom. At about this time, Prophet Moses entered Moab at the head of the Israelites and conquering the whole area, reached Heshbon and Shittim. Here he also died in the mountains of Abarim. After him Joshua, his first successor, crossed river Jordan from the east and captured Jericho, the first Palestinian city to fall to the Israelites. Later the whole of Palestine was conquered by them within a short period.

Ailah (Aqaba of the present day) in this map is the place where probably the well-known incident of the Sabbath-breakers, as mentioned in II:65 and VII:166, took place.

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personality made him the son of God and one of the Trinity, while others, who were impressed by the Divine aspect of his personality, declared him to be the incarnation of God and worshipped him as such. There were still others who tried to adopt the middle course between the two extremes and spent all their abilities to prove the impossibility that Jesus was both man and God at one and the same time and that God and the Messiah were two separate beings, but at the same time a single being. (Please refer to E.N.'s 212,213,215 of An-Nisā).

40. "He creates whatever He wills" implies that the miraculous birth of Jesus was merely one of God's countless wonderful manifestations, and that this and his moral excellences and his perceptible miracles should not mislead the Christians to regard the Messiah as God. It was their shortsightedness that they did not consider the other creations of God which were even more wonderful than the creation of Jesus and foolishly made him God. They forgot that His power has no bounds and seeing the miracles performed by a wonderful creation of the Creator they began to regard him as a creator; whereas wise men see the All-Powerful Creator in the wonders of His Creation and get the light of Faith from them.

41. In this context, this sentence is very comprehensive and significant and has double meanings. One meaning is that God Who had the power of sending bearers of good news and warners before, has now appointed the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) for the same mission and He has the power to do so. The other meaning is that if they do not obey the bearer of good news and warner they should bear in mind that Allah is All-Powerful and is able to inflict on them any punishment He likes without any hindrance.

42. This refers to the past glory of the Israelites that they enjoyed at a much earlier period before the advent of Moses. On the one hand, Prophets of the high rank of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph were raised among them; on the other, they won great political power in Egypt during the time of the Prophet Joseph and after him. For a long time they remained the greatest rulers of their time in the then civilized world, and their currency was in circulation not only in Egypt but also in the countries around it.

In contrast to the general belief that the glory of the Israelites begins with the advent of the Prophet Moses, the Qur'ān makes it clear here that the period of their real glory and greatness had passed long before him and he himself was holding that period before his people as an instance of their glorious past.

43. By the Holy Land is meant Palestine, which had been the home of the Prophets Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. When the Israelites left Egypt for good, God allotted this land to them and commanded them to conquer it.

44. This speech was made by the Prophet Moses when two years after their exodus from Egypt, the Israelites were encamping in the desert of Paran which lies in the Sinai Peninsula contiguous to the northern boundary of Arabia and the southern boundary of Palestine.

45. It may mean that the two persons were from among those who were filled with the fear of the mighty people, or they were from among those who were God-fearing people.

46. The details of their homeless wandering can be had from the books, Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua, of the Bible. In brief, it is this: The Prophet Moses despatched twelve chiefs of Israel from the desert of Paran to spy out the Holy Land. Accordingly, they spied it out and returned after forty days and made a report before all the congregation of Israel. They said, "Surely it floweth with milk and honey .....Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land: (and) We be not able to go up against (them) .....and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers and so we were in their sight." At this, all the community wailed aloud and said, "Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt; or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword that our wives and our children should be a prey? Were it not better for us to return into Egypt? But Joshua and Caleb, who had been among the twelve spies, rebuked the community for its cowardice. Caleb said, "Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." Then both declared, "If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it us.....Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land.....and the Lord is with us: fear them not. But all the congregation stoned them with stones." At last God became wrathful at their continuous misbehaviour and decreed, "Doubtless ye shall now wander in the wilderness forty years until all that were numbered of you.....from twenty years old and upward shall fall as carcasses in this wilderness, (and) your little ones (grow young).....then will I bring in and they shall know the land...." According to this Divine decree, they took 38 years to reach Jordan from the desert of Paran. During this period all those who were young at the time of the exodus from Egypt died and after the conquest of Jordan the Prophet Moses also died. After this, during the time of Joshua, son of Nun, the Israelites were able to conquer Palestine.

47. The incident contained in vv. 20-26 has been cited here with the special object to warn the Israelites. They have been reminded that they disobeyed Moses and swerved from the right path and showed cowardice and were

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الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَاَ ابْنَيْ اٰدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ ۘ اِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا
فَتُقُبِّلَ مِنْ اَحَدِهِمَا وَلَمْ يُتَقَبَّلْ مِنَ الْاٰخَرِ ۭ قَالَ لَاَقْتُلَنَّكَ ۭ قَالَ
اِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللّٰهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾ لَىِٕنْۢ بَسَطْتَّ اِلَيَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِيْ مَآ اَنَا
بِبَاسِطٍ يَّدِيَ اِلَيْكَ لِاَقْتُلَكَ ۚ اِنِّىْٓ اَخَافُ اللّٰهَ رَبَّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٢٨﴾ اِنِّىْٓ اُرِيْدُ
اَنْ تَبُوْٓاَ بِاِثْمِيْ وَاِثْمِكَ فَتَكُوْنَ مِنْ اَصْحٰبِ النَّارِ ۚ وَذٰلِكَ جَزٰۗؤُا
الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهٗ نَفْسُهٗ قَتْلَ اَخِيْهِ فَقَتَلَهٗ فَاَصْبَحَ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ﴿٣٠﴾
فَبَعَثَ اللّٰهُ غُرَابًا يَّبْحَثُ فِي الْاَرْضِ لِيُرِيَهٗ كَيْفَ يُوَارِيْ سَوْءَةَ اَخِيْهِ ۭ
قَالَ يٰوَيْلَتٰٓى اَعَجَزْتُ اَنْ اَكُوْنَ مِثْلَ هٰذَا الْغُرَابِ فَاُوَارِيَ سَوْءَةَ اَخِيْ ۚ
فَاَصْبَحَ مِنَ النّٰدِمِيْنَ ﴿٣١﴾ مِنْ اَجْلِ ذٰلِكَ ۚ كَتَبْنَا عَلٰي بَنِيْٓ اِسْرَاۗءِيْلَ اَنَّهٗ
مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًۢا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ اَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْاَرْضِ فَكَاَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ
جَمِيْعًا ۭ وَمَنْ اَحْيَاهَا فَكَاَنَّمَآ اَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيْعًا ۭ وَلَقَدْ جَاۗءَتْهُمْ
رُسُلُنَا بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ ۡ ثُمَّ اِنَّ كَثِيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ فِي الْاَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُوْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾
اِنَّمَا جَزٰۗؤُا الَّذِيْنَ يُحَارِبُوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْاَرْضِ فَسَادًا
اَنْ يُّقَتَّلُوْٓا اَوْ يُصَلَّبُوْٓا اَوْ تُقَطَّعَ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَاَرْجُلُهُمْ مِّنْ خِلَافٍ اَوْ
يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الْاَرْضِ ۭ ذٰلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ
عَظِيْمٌ ﴿٣٣﴾ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ تَابُوْا مِنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ تَقْدِرُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ فَاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ
اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَابْتَغُوْٓا اِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيْلَةَ
وَجَاهِدُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿٣٥﴾ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لَوْ اَنَّ لَهُمْ
مَّا فِي الْاَرْضِ جَمِيْعًا وَّمِثْلَهٗ مَعَهٗ لِيَفْتَدُوْا بِهٖ مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمِ

And tell them accurately the story of the two sons of Adam. 27-31
When the two offered their sacrifices, the offering of the one was accepted but that of the other was not accepted. The latter said, "I will kill you." The other answered, "Allah accepts the offerings of the pious people only.[48] Even if you stretch your hand to kill me, I shall not lift my hand to kill you,[49] for I fear Allah, the Lord of the Universe; I would rather prefer that you should bear the burden of my sin as well as of your own sin,[50] and become a dweller of hell; this is the just retribution of the iniquity of the aggressors." Even after this his evil soul prompted him to slay his brother without the slightest compunction; so he killed him and became one of the losers. Then Allah sent a raven which began to scratch the ground to show him how he might hide the corpse of his brother. Seeing this, he cried, "Woe be to me! I have not been able to do even as this raven has done and so devise a plan of hiding the corpse of my brother."[51] After this he became very remorseful of what he had done.[52]

That was why We prescribed this for the children of Israel:[53] 32
"He who killed any person, unless it be a person guilty of manslaughter, or of spreading chaos in the land, should be looked upon as though he had slain all mankind, and he who saved one life should be regarded as though he had saved the lives of all mankind."[54] But the majority of them went on committing excesses in the land even after Our Messengers came to them one after the other with clear directions.

The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His 33-34
Messenger and run about to spread mischief in the land [55] is this; they should be put to death or crucified or their alternate hands and feet should be cut off, or they should be banished from the land.[56] This is the disgrace and ignominy for them in this world and there is in store for them a harsher torment in the Hereafter, except those, who repent before you have power over them for you should know that Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate.[57]

O Believers, fear Allah and seek the means of winning His 35-36
pleasure [58] and exert your utmost in His way[59] so that you may attain true success. Note it well that those, who have adopted the way of disbelief, shall not escape retribution, for even if they possessed all the wealth of the earth and the like of it with it and offered it as ransom to

redeem themselves from the torment of the Day of Resurrection, that will not be accepted from them and they shall receive a painful punishment.

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consequently condemned to wander homeless for forty years but if they persisted in their attitude of rebellion against the mission of the Prophet Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him), the chastisement would be much more severe than that..

48. That is, "It is no fault of mine if your sacrifice has not been accepted; it is because you lack piety. You should, therefore, try to foster piety in yourself instead of making an attempt at slaying me.",

49. It does not mean: "If you attempt to kill me, I will sit with folded hands before you, ready to be killed without any resistance." What it means is: "You may cherish evil intentions of murdering me, but I will not; you may make schemes for my murder but I will do nothing to forestall you, even after knowing that you are making preparation for my murder." In this connection, it should be understood clearly that it is not virtue to offer oneself for murder, nor is it a virtue to refrain from resisting an aggressive attack. True virtue is that one should not plan the murder of an enemy though he might be in search of an opportunity to kill the one. A virtuous man would rather prefer, like the noble son of Adam, that the enemy might be the aggressor and not he.

50. That is, "I would rather prefer that you alone should be guilty of the sin of cherishing evil intentions of slaying me than that I should also be guilty of the same. Thus you shall bear the burden of your own sin of aggression as well as of the injury that I might inflict on you in self-defence."

51. Thus Allah warned the erring son of Adam of his ignorance and folly through a raven. And when once he became aware of the fact that the raven was better equipped for hiding the dead body, he was not only filled with remorse on this account but also began to feel that he had done an evil deed by slaying his brother. This is implied in: "After this he became very remorseful of what he had done."

52. The story of the two sons of Adam has been related here to reproach the Jews in a subtle manner for their plot to kill the Holy Prophet and some of his eminent Companions. (Please refer to E.N.30 of this Sūrah).

The similarity between the two incidents is quite obvious. The Jews plotted against the Holy Prophet and his Companions for the same reason for which the erring son of Adam had slain his pious brother. The Jews became jealous of the Holy Prophet and his Companions because God withdrew His

Favour from them and bestowed it upon the un-lettered Arabs just because the former lacked piety and the latter were God-fearing. Instead of considering the matter coolly and considering why they had been condemned and making up for their error which had brought God's wrath on them, they plotted to kill those whom God had blessed with His favours. And they did so inspite of the fact that they knew it well that their evil reaction could not win the favour of Allah but would make them even more condemnable than before.

53. That is, "Allah enjoined the Israelites to refrain from murder because they were showing the same murderous symptoms as had been shown by the cruel son of Adam. That is why such strict checks on murder were applied." But the pity is that these precious instructions are not found in the present Bible. The Talmud, however, says, "To him who kills a single individual of Israel, it shall be reckoned as if he had slain the whole race and he who preserves a single individual of Israel, according to the Book of Allah, he preserves the whole world." It also says that a judge of the Israelites in a case of murder would warn the witness saying, "To him who kills a single individual of Israel, it shall be reckoned as if he has slain the whole race."

54. This is to emphasize the sanctity of human life: it is essential for the preservation of human life that everyone should regard the life of the other as sacred and help to protect it. The one who takes the life of another without right, does not commit injustice to that one alone, but also proves that he has no feeling for the sanctity of human life and of mercy for others. Hence he is most surely the enemy of the whole human race, for if every individual suffered from the same kind of hard-heartedness, the whole human race would come to an end. On the contrary, if one helps to preserve a single human life, he is indeed a helper of all mankind for he possesses those qualities upon which depends the survival of the whole human race.

55. Here "the land" refers to that country or territory in which the maintenance of law and order is the responsibility of the Islamic State and "to wage war against Allah and His Messenger" is to wage war against the righteous system of government established by the Islamic State. As Allah likes that such a system of government should be established, He sent His Messenger to establish an equitable system of government, which should guarantee peace and justice to human beings, animals, trees, vegetation and everything in the earth, which may enable human beings to develop to the fullest their natural capabilities; which should exploit natural resources of the earth for the true progress and improvement of humanity and not for its destruction. It is obvious that any attempt, big or small, to undermine or overthrow such an established system, is in reality a war against

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الْقِيٰمَةِ مَا تُقُبِّلَ مِنْهُمْ ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ﴿36﴾ يُرِيْدُوْنَ اَنْ يَّخْرُجُوْا مِنَ
النَّارِ وَمَا هُمْ بِخٰرِجِيْنَ مِنْهَا ۡ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيْمٌ ﴿37﴾ وَالسَّارِقُ وَ
السَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوْٓا اَيْدِيَهُمَا جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ
عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿38﴾ فَمَنْ تَابَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهٖ وَاَصْلَحَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَتُوْبُ
عَلَيْهِ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿39﴾ اَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَهٗ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَالْاَرْضِ ۭ يُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ وَيَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
قَدِيْرٌ ﴿40﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الرَّسُوْلُ لَا يَحْزُنْكَ الَّذِيْنَ يُسَارِعُوْنَ فِي الْكُفْرِ مِنَ
الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْٓا اٰمَنَّا بِاَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ قُلُوْبُهُمْ ۛ وَمِنَ الَّذِيْنَ هَادُوْا ۛ
سَمّٰعُوْنَ لِلْكَذِبِ سَمّٰعُوْنَ لِقَوْمٍ اٰخَرِيْنَ ۙ لَمْ يَاْتُوْكَ ۭ يُحَرِّفُوْنَ الْكَلِمَ
مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهٖ ۚ يَقُوْلُوْنَ اِنْ اُوْتِيْتُمْ هٰذَا فَخُذُوْهُ وَاِنْ لَّمْ
تُؤْتَوْهُ فَاحْذَرُوْا ۭ وَمَنْ يُّرِدِ اللّٰهُ فِتْنَتَهٗ فَلَنْ تَمْلِكَ لَهٗ مِنَ اللّٰهِ شَيْـــًٔا ۭ
اُولٰۗىِٕكَ الَّذِيْنَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللّٰهُ اَنْ يُّطَهِّرَ قُلُوْبَهُمْ ۭ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ ۚ وَ
لَهُمْ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿41﴾ سَمّٰعُوْنَ لِلْكَذِبِ اَكّٰلُوْنَ لِلسُّحْتِ ۭ فَاِنْ
جَاۗءُوْكَ فَاحْكُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ اَوْ اَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ ۚ وَاِنْ تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ فَلَنْ
يَّضُرُّوْكَ شَيْـــًٔا ۭ وَاِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ
الْمُقْسِطِيْنَ ﴿42﴾ وَكَيْفَ يُحَكِّمُوْنَكَ وَعِنْدَهُمُ التَّوْرٰىةُ فِيْهَا حُكْمُ اللّٰهِ
ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ ۭ وَمَآ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿43﴾ اِنَّآ اَنْزَلْنَا
التَّوْرٰىةَ فِيْهَا هُدًى وَّنُوْرٌ ۚ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّوْنَ الَّذِيْنَ اَسْلَمُوْا لِلَّذِيْنَ
هَادُوْا وَالرَّبّٰنِيُّوْنَ وَالْاَحْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوْا مِنْ كِتٰبِ اللّٰهِ وَكَانُوْا

الوقف على الواو لبيان الوجه

They will wish to get out of the fire of Hell but shall not be able to come forth from it and theirs shall be an everlasting torment. 37

As for the thief, whether man or woman, cut off the hand[60] of either of them: it is the recompense for what they have earned, and an exemplary punishment from Allah; Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise. But whoever repents after his iniquity and reforms himself, Allah will surely turn towards him with His favour;[61] Allah is Forgiving and Compassionate. Do you not know that Allah is the Sovereign of the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth? He may punish whom He wills and may pardon whom He wills; He has power over everything. 38-40

O Messenger, let not those who are striving hard in the way of disbelief,[62] grieve you, whether they be from among those who say with their mouths, "We believe," but their hearts do not believe, or from among those who have become Jews; for the latter eagerly listen to lies.[63] They spy for other people who have never had any chance of coming to you[64] : they twist the words of Allah's Book out of their context in order to distort their proper meaning[65]: they say to the people, "If you are enjoined to observe such and such teaching, accept it; if it is other than this, reject it."[66] You can do nothing to save from Allah's punishment a man whom Allah wills to put to trial.[67] They are those, whose hearts Allah does not will to purify[68]; there is ignominy for them in this world and a grievous punishment in the Hereafter. 41

They are listeners to falsehood and greedy devourers of the forbidden.[69] If, therefore, they come to you (with their cases), you may judge between them or refuse to do so: for even if you refuse, they will not be able to do any harm to you; but if you judge between them, then judge with justice, for Allah loves those who act justly.[70] 42-43

Yet, how is it that they make you their judge, when they themselves possess the Torah, in which there is Allah's judgement, and even then they are turning away from it?[71] In fact, these people have no faith.

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Allah and His Messenger. It does not make any difference whether that mischief is created by criminals and murderers who cause disorder in the settled and peaceful society, or by armed forces who attempt to overthrow the Islamic State and establish some corrupt un-Islamic system instead. And every sovereign treats such

a violation directed against his authority or against any of his officials as war against himself.

56. An abstract of these alternative punishments has been given so that the judge or the ruler may exercise his discretion and award punishment according to the nature and extent of the crime. The real object is to show that any attempt by any person residing in the Islamic State, to overthrow its government is high treason and a most heinous crime, and that the offender is liable to be awarded any of these capital punishments according to the circumstance.

57. This implies that if they have refrained from creating mischief and from making any attempt at overthrowing the righteous system, and have shown by their conduct that they are peace-loving and law-abiding good citizens, none of the above mentioned punishments will be inflicted upon them, even if they might have committed any of the crimes before their repentance. They would, however, be liable to be called to account in a court of law for any offence against any individual, such as murder, theft, etc., but they will not be tried for any previous offence of treason or rebellion or war against Allah and His Messenger.

58. That is, You should seek all those means that help obtain Allah's nearness and His pleasure."

59. "Exert your utmost" does not fully convey the meaning of *Jāhidū*. It implies that the Believers should struggle against all the forces that stand in the way of Allah, as if to say, "You can please Allah and win His favour only if you exert your utmost in the way of Allah: struggle hard against all the persons, parties and forces which stand in Allah's way, which hinder you from Allah's way to turn you away from it, which do not let you follow Allah's way as His servants and force you to become their servants or servants of others. Such exertion and struggle will lead you to true success and become the means of obtaining your nearness to Allah."

Thus, this verse exhorts the Believer to fight his enemies on all fronts. On one side, he confronts Satan and a host of his followers, and on the second, his own self and its alluring temptations. On the third side, he has to fight many people who have swerved from the way of God, and with whom he is bound by close social, cultural and economic relations. On the fourth side, he is required to oppose all those religious, cultural and political systems that are founded on rebellion against God and force people to submit to falsehood instead of the Truth. Though these enemies employ different weapons, they all have one and the same object in view, that is, to subdue their victims and bring them under their own subjection. It is obvious that true success can only be achieved if one becomes wholly and solely a servant of God and obeys Him openly and also secretly, to the

exclusion of obedience to all others. Thus there is bound to be a conflict with all the four enemies: Therefore the Believer cannot achieve his object unless he engages himself with all these hostile and opposing forces at one and the same time and at all events, and removing all these hindrances marches onwards on the way of Allah.

60. One hand of the thief (and not both hands) is to be cut off, and the consensus of opinion is that the right hand should be cut off for the first theft.

The Holy Prophet has excluded an act of breach of trust from theft and decreed that the hand of the one guilty of this is not to be cut off. An act of theft is committed only when a person wrongfully takes away goods from the custody of another and brings them into his own possession.

The Holy Prophet has also decreed that a hand is not to be cut off for the theft of a thing whose value is less than that of a shield. At that time the price of a shield according to (a) 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās was ten *dirhams*, (b) Ibn 'Umar three *dirhams*, (c) Anas bin Mālik five *dirhams*, and (d) Ḥaḍrat 'Āishah one-fourth of a *dinār*. That is why there has been a difference of opinion among the Jurists in regard to the minimum limit for theft for the cutting off of a hand. According to Imām Abū Hanīfah, it is ten *dirhams* and according to Imāms Mālik, Shāfi'ī and Ahmad it is one-fourth of a *dinār*. (At that time a *dirham* was equal to the value of three *mashas* and one anda half *rattīs* of silver, and one-fourth of a *dinār* was equal to three *dirhams*).

Moreover, there are many things for the theft of which the hand is not to be cut off. For instance, the Holy Prophet directed that hand should not be cut off for the theft of fruits and vegetables, and that there should be no cutting off of hand for the theft of eatables. According to a Tradition from Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah, "Hands were not cut off for the theft of paltry things during the time of the Holy Prophet (Allah's peace be upon him)." Caliphs 'Uthmān and 'Alī decreed, and no Companion disagreed, that a hand is not to be cut off for the theft of a bird. Moreover, Caliphs 'Umar and 'Alī did not cut off a hand for a theft from the Public Treasury and there is no mention of any kind of disagreement among the Companions about this also.

That is why the Jurists have not included certain things in the list of those for the theft of which hands should be cut off. According to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, hands should not be cut off for the theft of vegetables, fruits, flesh, cooked food, grain which has not yet been gathered together, articles used for sports and music. Besides these, he is of the opinion that the hand should not be cut off for the theft of animals grazing in forests and for theft from the Public Treasury. Likewise the other Imāms also have excluded the theft of certain things from this punishment,

but this does not mean that there is no punishment at all for those thefts. These crimes should be punished in other ways than this.

61. This does not mean that if the thief repents, his hand should not be cut off. It only means that if a person repents after his hand has been cut off and reforms himself and becomes a true servant of God, he will save himself from the wrath of Allah, Who will cleanse him of his sin. On the contrary, if a person does not repent and reform himself even after his hand has been cut off, but goes on nurturing evil thoughts, this clearly shows that he has not cleansed his heart even after this severe punishment. Therefore he shall deserve the wrath of Allah as he did before his hand was cut off. That is why the Qur'ān exhorts such a person to beg for the forgiveness of Allah and reform himself. The hand is cut off for the preservation of society. The punishment does not necessarily purify the soul. This can only be achieved by repentance and turning to God. It is reported in the Traditions that once the hand of a thief was cut off by the order of the Holy Prophet. After this he sent for him and asked him to say, "I beg for Allah's forgiveness and turn to Him." Accordingly, the thief uttered these words. Then the Holy Prophet invoked Allah's forgiveness for him.

62. This refers to the people who were using all their intellectual powers and energies to preserve the previous state of ignorance against the reformative efforts of Islam. They were planning all sorts of shameless schemes against the Holy Prophet; they were distorting the Truth knowingly and doing their worst to defeat his holy mission by lies, deceit, cunning and the like, though he was selflessly working for the good of humanity and their own good. Naturally it grieved him to see that those mean and ignoble people were employing mean tactics to defeat his noble mission. Of course Allah does not mean to ask the Holy Prophet to suppress that grief which is felt over such a state but consoles him not to be disheartened by their evil machinations and advises him to go on working patiently for the reform of the people who cannot be expected to behave otherwise.

63. It implies two things: (1) These people are the slaves of their lusts and are not interested at all in the Truth but in falsehood only. They eagerly listen to lies because that alone can gratify their lust for falsehood. (2) They attend the meetings of the Holy Prophet and his followers so that they might spread false reports about them in order to malign them.

64. This also implies two things: (1) They come as spies to the meetings of the Holy Prophet and his followers in order to obtain some secret information for the benefit of the enemies of Islam. (2) They come with hostile intent to gather material for bringing false accusations and slander against the Holy Prophet and his followers so that they may cause misunderstandings among those who had no opportunity of making direct contacts with him and the Muslims.

65. Allah consoles the Holy Prophet that he should not be disheartened by the behaviour of those people who do not hesitate to twist the words of the Torah out of their context and change their meanings to suit their lusts.

66. That is, "The Jewish scholars tell their illiterate people to accept any teaching of the Holy Prophet only if it agrees with theirs; if it does not, they should reject it."

67. Allah puts to trial a man who cherishes evil inclinations by putting temptations before him to test whether he has any good left in him or not. If he has no goodness left in him, he takes each temptation as an "opportunity," and the evil in him overcomes him and renders him an easy prey to further temptations. In a degenerate case like this, it is not in the power of any well-wisher to save such a person from falling into temptation. Allah puts to trial not only individuals but communities as well.

68. Allah did not will to purify such a person because he himself did not wish to purify himself. It is not the way of Allah to deprive a man of purification, if he desires it and tries for it. He does not will to purify only that person who does not intend to purify himself.

69. This particularly refers to their jurists and judges who accepted false evidence and unjustly decided cases in favour of those from whom they took bribes or from whom they expected unlawful gains.

70. At that time the Jews had freedom in their internal affairs and their cases were decided by their own judges according to their own law, for they had not as yet become subjects of the Islamic State, but had only entered into treaties with it. Therefore they were not bound to bring their cases to the Holy Prophet or to the judges appointed by him. Nevertheless, sometimes, when their own law did not suit them, they would take their cases to the Holy Prophet in the hope that they might obtain a more favourable decree from him than they could from their own law.

Here it refers to a case of illicit relationship between a man and a woman who belonged to respectable families of the Jews of Khaibar. According to the Torah (Deut. 22 : 23-24), their punishment was that both of them should be stoned to death. As the Jews did not want to inflict this punishment, they decided that the case should be taken to the Holy Prophet and that they would accept his decision only if it was other than stoning to death. When the Holy Prophet had heard the case he decreed that they should be stoned to death, but the Jews rejected it. Then the Holy Prophet asked them what the punishment was according to the Torah. They replied that it was to flog the culprits and to blacken their faces and to mount

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عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَآءَ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ وَاخْشَوْنِ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوْا بِاٰيٰتِيْ ثَمَنًا
قَلِيْلًا ۭ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكُمْ بِمَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ فَاُولٰۗىِٕكَ هُمُ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ ﴿44﴾ وَكَتَبْنَا
عَلَيْهِمْ فِيْهَآ اَنَّ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ ۙ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالْاَنْفَ بِالْاَنْفِ
وَالْاُذُنَ بِالْاُذُنِ وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ ۙ وَالْجُرُوْحَ قِصَاصٌ ۭ فَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ
بِهٖ فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَّهٗ ۭ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكُمْ بِمَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ فَاُولٰۗىِٕكَ هُمُ
الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿45﴾ وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلٰٓي اٰثَارِهِمْ بِعِيْسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ
يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرٰىةِ ۠ وَاٰتَيْنٰهُ الْاِنْجِيْلَ فِيْهِ هُدًى وَّنُوْرٌ ۙ وَّمُصَدِّقًا
لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرٰىةِ وَهُدًى وَّمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿46﴾ وَلْيَحْكُمْ
اَهْلُ الْاِنْجِيْلِ بِمَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ فِيْهِ ۭ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكُمْ بِمَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ
فَاُولٰۗىِٕكَ هُمُ الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿47﴾ وَاَنْزَلْنَآ اِلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا
بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتٰبِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ فَاحْكُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ
وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ اَهْوَاۗءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاۗءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ ۭ لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً
وَّمِنْهَاجًا ۭ وَلَوْ شَاۗءَ اللّٰهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ اُمَّةً وَّاحِدَةً وَّلٰكِنْ لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِيْ
مَآ اٰتٰىكُمْ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرٰتِ ۭ اِلَى اللّٰهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيْعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا
كُنْتُمْ فِيْهِ تَخْتَلِفُوْنَ ﴿48﴾ وَاَنِ احْكُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ
اَهْوَاۗءَهُمْ وَاحْذَرْهُمْ اَنْ يَّفْتِنُوْكَ عَنْۢ بَعْضِ مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ اِلَيْكَ ۭ
فَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمْ اَنَّمَا يُرِيْدُ اللّٰهُ اَنْ يُّصِيْبَهُمْ بِبَعْضِ ذُنُوْبِهِمْ ۭ وَاِنَّ
كَثِيْرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ لَفٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿49﴾ اَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُوْنَ ۭ وَمَنْ اَحْسَنُ
مِنَ اللّٰهِ حُكْمًا لِّقَوْمٍ يُّوْقِنُوْنَ ﴿50﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُوْدَ

Indeed, We sent down the Torah wherein was Guidance and Light: thereby all the Prophets, who were Muslims, judged the cases of those who had become Jews.[72] Likewise the *Rabbānis* and the *Aḥbār*[73] (based their judgement on it), for they were made the guardians of the Book of Allah and witnesses to it. So, (O Jews), do not fear the people but fear Me and do not sell My revelations for paltry worldly gains: those, who do not judge by the Law which Allah has sent down, are indeed the disbelievers. 44

We had prescribed this decree in the Torah for the Jews: "Life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and for all wounds equal retaliation."[74] However, whoever forgoes retaliation as charity, it shall be expiation for him[75]: those, who do not judge by the Law which Allah has sent down, are indeed the unjust people. 45

Then after those Prophets, We sent Jesus, son of Mary; he confirmed whatever had still remained intact of the Torah in his time. And We gave him the Gospel wherein was Guidance and Light; that, too, confirmed what was intact of the Torah[76] at the time; moreover, it was guidance and admonition for the God-fearing people. We had enjoined that those who were given the Gospel should judge by the Law which Allah has sent down in it: those, who do not judge by the Law which Allah has sent down, are the transgressors.[77] 46-47

Then, O Muḥammad, We sent this Book to you which has brought the Truth: it confirms whatever has remained intact from the Book[78] at the time of its revelation and safeguards[79] and protects it. Therefore you should judge between the people by the Law sent down by Allah and do not follow their desires by turning aside from the Truth that has come to you.[80]—We prescribed a law and a way of life for each of you, though your Lord could have made all of you a single community, if He had so willed. But (He willed otherwise) in order to test you in what He has bestowed upon each of you: therefore try to excel one another in good deeds. Ultimately, you shall all return to Him; then He will let you know the truth about that in which you have been differing.[81] So,[82] O Muḥammad, judge between these people by the Law that has been sent down to you and do not follow their wishes: be on your guard lest these people should tempt you away, even in the least, from the Guidance that has been sent down to you by 4850

Allah. If they turn away from it, then know that Allah wills to involve them in trouble in consequence of some of their sins. And the fact is that the majority of these people are transgressors. (If they turn away from the Divine Law, then) do they desire to be judged by the laws of ignorance?[83] Yet there is no better judge than Allah for those who believe in Him.

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them on a donkey. The Holy Prophet asked their rabbis to declare on oath whether that was the punishment for adultery committed by a married couple. They all but one answered that it was so. The one who had kept quiet was Ibn Ṣuryā, who was considered to be the greatest scholar of the Torah by the Jews themselves. The Holy Prophet pointedly addressed him and asked, "I want you to swear by that God Who saved your people from the Pharaoh and gave you the Law on the Tūr and answer whether it is this same punishment for adultery in the Torah that these people tell." He said, "I would never have confessed that the punishment for adultery is stoning the culprits to death, if you had not laid upon me such a heavy oath. The fact is that when adultery became common among us, the judges would let the offenders go, if they happened to be big people. But as this differentiation caused a great discontent among the common people, we made a change in the Law that instead of stoning the culprits to death they should be flogged and mounted on a donkey with blackened faces." After this, no other course was left for the Jews and the culprits were stoned to death by the order of the Holy Prophet.

71. In this verse Allah has fully exposed the dishonesty of these "religious people" who had established their authority for piety and knowledge of the Book throughout Arabia. The very fact that they had discarded the Book they themselves believed to be the Book of Allah and brought their case to the Holy Prophet whom they did not believe to be a Prophet, showed that their claim of belief in the Book was hollow. This also showed that they did not sincerely believe in anything but their lusts. They discarded the Book which they believed to be the Book of God, just because its decree was against their lusts and they went to the one whom they considered to be a false prophet in the hope that they might get a decree that might suit their lusts.

72. Here the fact that all the Prophets were Muslims and that the Jews had given up "Islam" and turned "Jews", has also incidentally been stressed.

73. The *Rabbānīs* were the doctors and the *Aḥbār* the jurists of the Law.

74. Compare this with Exodus, 21 : 23-27.

75. It implies that if one forgoes retaliation with the intention of doing a good turn, this good act will atone for many of his sins. The Holy Prophet explained this, saying, "If one receives a wound in one's body and forgoes its retaliation, then one's sins will be forgiven in proportion to the degree of forgiveness."

76. This means that Jesus did not bring any new religion but followed the same way that was followed by all the Prophets before him and invited the people to the same. He believed in what was intact in his time from among the original teachings of the Torah, and the Gospel also testified to the same.(Matthew, 5: 17-18). The Qur'ān reiterates the fact that each and every prophet, who was sent by Allah to any part of the world, confirmed the Message of all the Prophets who had gone before him and exerted his utmost to complete the work which they had left as a holy heritage, for he did not come to refute them or efface their religion and establish his own religion instead. Likewise Allah did not send down any of His Books to refute any of His own previous Books, but to support and confirm them.

77. In this passage (vv. 44-47) Allah has shown that those who do not judge by the Law sent down by Him are: (1) disbelievers, (2) unjust people and (3) transgressors. As a corollary to this, the person who discards the Law of Allah and judges by the law formulated by himself or by others is guilty of three crimes. First, he practises disbelief by his rejection of the Law of Allah. Secondly, he becomes guilty of injustice because he violates the Law of Allah which is perfectly just and equitable. Thirdly, he became a transgressor *(fāsiq)* against Allah, because, in spite of being Allah's servant, he transgressed against his Master's Law and adopted his own law or that of another. Thus practically he broke away from the allegiance and subjection of his Master and denied His Authority: this is *fisq*.

This disbelief, injustice and transgression are inherently part and parcel of the violation of Divine Law. It is, therefore, not possible to avoid these three crimes where there is such a violation. They, however, vary in their relative guilt in accordance with the nature and extent of the rejection of the Law. If one gives judgement against the Divine Law on the basis that he considers that Law to be wrong and his own or someone else's law to be right, such a person shall be a disbeliever, an unjust person and transgressor, in the fullest sense of the words. However, if one holds the belief that the Law of Allah is right, but in practice gives judgement against it, such a one shall not be outside the Muslim community, but shall be considered to be mixing his belief with disbelief, injustice and transgression. Likewise, if one rejects the Law of Allah in all affairs of life, he shall be considered to be a disbeliever, unjust person and transgressor in every aspect of life and if one accepts the Law in certain matters and rejects it in others,

one shall have a mixture of belief and Islam, disbelief, injustice and transgression, all mixed together in one's life, exactly in the proportion one obeys the Law or violates it.

Some commentators are of the opinion that the above-mentioned verses apply only to the People of the Book, but the words of the Qur'ān do not support this at all. Ḥadrat Ḥudhaifah refuted this version very aptly. Someone said to him that these verses applied to the children of Israel only, that is, if one of the Jews judged against the Law sent down by Allah, he would be a disbeliever, transgressor and rebel but not a Muslim. Hadrat Hudhaifah replied. "What good brethren the children of Israel are to you: all that is bitter is for them and all that is sweet is for you! By God, you will follow their way step by step (and shall be dealt with like them)."

78. The use of the word *Al-Kitāb* (the Book) here is very significant. Instead of saying, "The Qur'ān confirms whatever has remained intact from the former Books," it says, "from the Book." This is to show that the Qur'ān and all the Books that were sent down by Allah in different languages and in different ages are in reality one and the same Book which has one and the same Author and one and the same object and aim: they impart one and the same knowledge and teaching to mankind with the only difference that they are couched in different languages and employ different methods to suit the various addresses. Therefore the fact that these Books support and do not refute, confirm and do not contradict, one another, shows that they are all different versions of one and the same Book (*Al-Kitāb*).

79. The Arabic word *Muhaimin* is very comprehensive in meaning. It means one who safeguards, watches over, stands witness, preserves, and upholds. The Qur'ān safeguards "the Book," for it has preserved within it the teachings of all the former Books. It watches over them in the sense that it will not let go waste their true teachings. It supports and upholds these Books in the sense that it corroborates the Word of God which has remained intact in them. It stands a witness because it bears testimony to the Word of God contained in those Books and helps to sort it out from the interpretations and commentaries of the people which were mixed with it; what is confirmed by the Qur'ān is the Word of God and what is against it is that of the people.

80. "We prescribed..... to differ" is a parenthesis, which answer a perplexing question that might arise from the preceding passage. The question is: Why are there differences in the details of their Laws, if all the Prophets and all the Books taught the same way of life and all of them confirmed and supported one another ? For instance , how is it that there are some differences in the details of

the form of worship, in the limits of the lawful and the unlawful and in cultural and social regulations taught by different Prophets and Books?

81. Here is the answer to the above-mentioned question:

(1) It is wrong to infer from the above-mentioned differences in the details of the different Laws that they have been derived from different sources and have different origins. As a matter of fact, they all have come from Allah, Who prescribed different regulations to suit different communities and different ages.

(2) No doubt Allah could have prescribed one and the same Law for all human beings from the very beginning and made them a single community but He did not do so for many good reasons. One of these reasons is to test people whether they obey or not what is given to them by Allah. Those people, who understand the real nature and spirit of the Divine Way and the position of the regulations in it and are not prejudiced, will recognize and accept the Truth in whatever form it comes. Such people will never hesitate to submit to the new regulations sent by Allah to replace the former ones. On the contrary, those, who do not understand the true spirit of the Way, but consider the regulations and their details alone to be the Way and who have become static and prejudiced because of their own additions to it, will reject every new thing that comes from Allah to replace what they already possess. And such a test was essential to distinguish the two above-mentioned kinds of people; therefore different laws and regulations were prescribed.

(3) As the real object of all the laws is the cultivation of virtues, Allah has commanded the people to excel one another in virtues, without paying heed to the apparent differences in different Laws. This is why those people, who keep in view the real aim of the Law, should advance towards it on the lines indicated by the Divine Laws and regulations.

(4) As regards the differences, which have been produced by the prejudices, obduracies and wrong mental attitudes, these can neither be resolved in polemical symposiums nor on the battlefield, but will be decided by Allah Himself in His Final Judgement. Then the Reality will be revealed and the people will come to know the amount of truth or falsehood that lay hidden in the arguments in which they were engaged throughout their lives.

82. From here the same subject has been resumed that was interrupted by the parenthesis.

[Contd. on p. 462

وَقف لازم
وقف منزل حسن لمن وصل
وقف معانقہ

وَالنَّصٰرٰٓى اَوْلِيَآءَ ۘ بَعْضُهُمْ اَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّتَوَلَّهُمْ مِّنْكُمْ فَاِنَّهٗ
مِنْهُمْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِى الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿51﴾ فَتَرَى الَّذِيْنَ فِىْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ
مَّرَضٌ يُّسَارِعُوْنَ فِيْهِمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ نَخْشٰٓى اَنْ تُصِيْبَنَا دَآئِرَةٌ ؕ فَعَسَى اللّٰهُ
اَنْ يَّاْتِىَ بِالْفَتْحِ اَوْ اَمْرٍ مِّنْ عِنْدِهٖ فَيُصْبِحُوْا عَلٰى مَآ اَسَرُّوْا فِىْٓ اَنْفُسِهِمْ
نٰدِمِيْنَ ﴿52﴾ وَيَقُوْلُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اَهٰٓؤُلَآءِ الَّذِيْنَ اَقْسَمُوْا بِاللّٰهِ جَهْدَ
اَيْمَانِهِمْ ۙ اِنَّهُمْ لَمَعَكُمْ ؕ حَبِطَتْ اَعْمَالُهُمْ فَاَصْبَحُوْا خٰسِرِيْنَ ﴿53﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا
الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مَنْ يَّرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِيْنِهٖ فَسَوْفَ يَاْتِى اللّٰهُ بِقَوْمٍ
يُّحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّوْنَهٗٓ ۙ اَذِلَّةٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اَعِزَّةٍ عَلَى الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ۡ
يُجَاهِدُوْنَ فِىْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَلَا يَخَافُوْنَ لَوْمَةَ لَآئِمٍ ؕ ذٰلِكَ فَضْلُ
اللّٰهِ يُؤْتِيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿54﴾ اِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ
وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا الَّذِيْنَ يُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَيُؤْتُوْنَ الزَّكٰوةَ وَهُمْ
رٰكِعُوْنَ ﴿55﴾ وَمَنْ يَّتَوَلَّ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا فَاِنَّ حِزْبَ
اللّٰهِ هُمُ الْغٰلِبُوْنَ ﴿56﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الَّذِيْنَ اتَّخَذُوْا
دِيْنَكُمْ هُزُوًا وَّلَعِبًا مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَالْكُفَّارَ
اَوْلِيَآءَ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿57﴾ وَاِذَا نَادَيْتُمْ اِلَى الصَّلٰوةِ
اتَّخَذُوْهَا هُزُوًا وَّلَعِبًا ؕ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿58﴾ قُلْ يٰٓاَهْلَ
الْكِتٰبِ هَلْ تَنْقِمُوْنَ مِنَّآ اِلَّآ اَنْ اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْنَا وَمَآ
اُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۙ وَاَنَّ اَكْثَرَكُمْ فٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿59﴾ قُلْ هَلْ اُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِشَرٍّ مِّنْ
ذٰلِكَ مَثُوْبَةً عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ؕ مَنْ لَّعَنَهُ اللّٰهُ وَغَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلَ

الثلاثة

٥ ع ١٢

O Believers, do not take the Jews nor the Christians as your friends: they are one another's friends only. If anyone of you takes them as friends, surely he shall be counted among them; indeed Allah deprives the wrong-doers of His Guidance. 51

You see that those, who have the disease of hypocrisy in their hearts, are always moving among them. They say, "We fear lest we should get involved in some disaster."[84] But it may be that these people will feel ashamed of the hypocrisy they are hiding in their hearts, when Allah will give you a decisive victory or show something else from Himself.[85] At that time the Believers will say, "Are these the same people who stated upon solemn oaths by Allah that they were with you?" — All their deeds became vain and they ended in utter failure.[86] 52-53

O Believers, whoever turns away from Islam, (let him); Allah will raise many such people whom He will love and who will love Him; who will be lenient towards the Believers but stern towards the disbelievers[87]; who will exert their utmost in the way of Allah and will not fear the censure of anyone who censures them.[88] This is Allah's bounty: He bestows it on whomever He wills, for Allah's resources are boundless and He is All-Knowing. 54

Your friends, indeed, are Allah and His Messenger and the Believers who establish the Ṣalāt, pay the Zakāt and bow down before Allah. And whoever makes Allah and His Messenger and the Believers his friends, let him know that Allah's party will surely come out victorious. 55-56

O Believers, do not take your friends from among the people, who were given the Book before you and such as make a jest and pastime of your Faith; and (likewise do not take for your friends) the other disbelievers; fear Allah, if you are true Believers. When you make a call for the Prayer, they make it an object of jest and sport[89]; this is because they are devoid of understanding.[90] Say to them, "O people of the Book, what is there that gives you offence against us other than that we believe in Allah and what has been sent down to us and what was sent down before us? And the fact is that most of you are transgressors." Then say, "Should I inform you of those, who will 57-60

have even worse recompense from Allah than the transgressors?" They are those whom Allah has cursed; who have been under His wrath; some of whom were turned into apes and swine; who worshipped *tāghūt;* those are the people who are in a far worse plight and who have turned farthest away from the Right Way."[91]

Contd. from p. 459]

83. The word *Jāhiliyyat* (ignorance) is the antonym of Islam. The way of Islam is entirely based on the knowledge imparted by Allah Who possesses the knowledge of all realities. On the contrary, every way different from and opposed to the way of Islam is the way of ignorance. The pre-Islamic period of Arabia is called the period of ignorance in the sense that the people had invented their own ways of life that were based on mere guess-work or lusts. Therefore whenever any of these ways will be adopted, that period will be called the period of "ignorance". Likewise the knowledge which is imparted in Schools and Universities today is only a partial knowledge and cannot in any way suffice for the right guidance of mankind. That is why all the systems of life that are based on fancies and conjectures and lusts with the help of such partial knowledge, in utter disregard of the Divine knowledge, shall likewise be the ways of "ignorance" like the ways of the pre-Islamic period.

84. This refers to the condition of the hypocrites during the period when the conflict between Islam and *kufr* had not yet come to any decisive conclusion. Although Islam had become a power by dint of the sacrifices of its followers, the opposing forces were also very powerful and there were equal chances of the victory of either side. The hypocrites, while living among the Muslims, wanted to keep good relations with the Jews and the Christians so that if the conflict ended in the defeat of the Muslims, they might safely take refuge with their enemies. Then there was also the economic factor; at that time the Jews and the Christians were economically the most powerful people in Arabia. The money-lending business was almost entirely in their hands and they had a strong economic hold upon the people. Moreover, the most fertile regions of Arabia were in their possession. This also led the hypocrites to preserve their old relations with them. In short, they considered it very dangerous to break relations with these people because of the conflict between Islam and *kufr*, for they feared that it might ruin them economically and politically.

85. That is, something short of a decisive victory that might convince the people that it was Islam that was ultimately going to win in the conflict.

86. All the good acts that they did as Muslims were lost because they lacked sincerity. The Prayers they offered, the Fast they observed, the *Zakāt* dues they paid, and other things they did in obedience to the Islamic Law became null and void because there was no sincerity in them. They did not dedicate themselves wholly to Allah but had divided their loyalties equally between Allah and His rebels for the sake of their worldly interests.

87. "Who will be lenient towards the Believers" means that they will never use force against the Believers and will never employ their intelligence, ability, influence, wealth, power or anything else to suppress or oppress them or inflict loss on them. The Muslims will always find such persons to be mild, kindly, amiable and sympathetic.

".....but stern towards the disbelievers" means that a Believer will be firm, strict, uncompromising and militant towards the opponents of Islam by virtue of his firm faith, sincere religious sense, strict principles, strong character and God-given intelligence. Whenever the disbelievers will come in conflict with him, they will find that a Believer can neither be bought nor coerced because he is so uncompromising in his Islamic principles that he would rather die than yield.

88. That is, they will fearlessly follow the Way of Allah and act upon His commandments, and declare to be right what is right, and wrong what is wrong, according to it, and will not mind in the least the opposition, the censure, the criticism, the objections, the derision and ridicules of their opponents. They will boldly follow the Way of Islam which they sincerely believe to be right, even if the popular opinion is against Islam and they are exposed to the ridicule, derision and taunts of the world.

89. They make the call to the Prayer an object of ridicule by mimicking and deriding it and by perverting its words.

90. This very fact of their making the call to the Prayer an object of ridicule is a clear proof of their lack of understanding. Had they not been involved in folly and ignorance, they would never have indulged in such frivolous things inspite of their religious difference with the Muslims, because no sensible person would ever think of ridiculing the call to the worship of Allah made by any people whatsoever.

91. Verse 60 contains a subtle reference to the shamefaced impudence of the Jews in opposing the Muslims in spite of the fact that they had often been under the curse and wrath of Allah for their evil deeds. According to their own history they broke the Sabbath and many of them were turned into apes and swine.

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مِنْهُمُ الْقِرَدَةَ وَالْخَنَازِيْرَ وَعَبَدَ الطَّاغُوْتَ ۭ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَّ
اَضَلُّ عَنْ سَوَاۗءِ السَّبِيْلِ ۝ وَاِذَا جَاۗءُوْكُمْ قَالُوْٓا اٰمَنَّا وَقَدْ دَّخَلُوْا
بِالْكُفْرِ وَهُمْ قَدْ خَرَجُوْا بِهٖ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْتُمُوْنَ ۝ وَتَرٰى
كَثِيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ يُسَارِعُوْنَ فِي الْاِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاَكْلِهِمُ السُّحْتَ ۭ
لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝ لَوْلَا يَنْهٰىهُمُ الرَّبّٰنِيُّوْنَ وَالْاَحْبَارُ عَنْ
قَوْلِهِمُ الْاِثْمَ وَاَكْلِهِمُ السُّحْتَ ۭ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوْا يَصْنَعُوْنَ ۝ وَقَالَتِ
الْيَهُوْدُ يَدُ اللّٰهِ مَغْلُوْلَةٌ ۭ غُلَّتْ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَلُعِنُوْا بِمَا قَالُوْا ۘ بَلْ يَدٰهُ
مَبْسُوْطَتٰنِ ۙ يُنْفِقُ كَيْفَ يَشَاۗءُ ۭ وَلَيَزِيْدَنَّ كَثِيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ مَّآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكَ
مِنْ رَّبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَّكُفْرًا ۭ وَاَلْقَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاۗءَ اِلٰى
يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۭ كُلَّمَآ اَوْقَدُوْا نَارًا لِّلْحَرْبِ اَطْفَاَهَا اللّٰهُ ۙ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي
الْاَرْضِ فَسَادًا ۭ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِيْنَ ۝ وَلَوْ اَنَّ اَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ
اٰمَنُوْا وَاتَّقَوْا لَكَفَّرْنَا عَنْهُمْ سَيِّاٰتِهِمْ وَلَاَدْخَلْنٰهُمْ جَنّٰتِ النَّعِيْمِ ۝
وَلَوْ اَنَّهُمْ اَقَامُوا التَّوْرٰىةَ وَالْاِنْجِيْلَ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ رَّبِّهِمْ
لَاَكَلُوْا مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِنْ تَحْتِ اَرْجُلِهِمْ ۭ مِنْهُمْ اُمَّةٌ مُّقْتَصِدَةٌ ۭ
وَكَثِيْرٌ مِّنْهُمْ سَاۗءَ مَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الرَّسُوْلُ بَلِّغْ مَآ اُنْزِلَ
اِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ ۭ وَاِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهٗ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْصِمُكَ
مِنَ النَّاسِ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ۝ قُلْ يٰٓاَهْلَ
الْكِتٰبِ لَسْتُمْ عَلٰى شَيْءٍ حَتّٰى تُقِيْمُوا التَّوْرٰىةَ وَالْاِنْجِيْلَ وَمَآ
اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكُمْ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ۭ وَلَيَزِيْدَنَّ كَثِيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ مَّآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكَ

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When they come to you, they say, "We have believed," but in fact they had come in a state of un-belief and departed with disbelief; Allah knows full well what they were concealing in their hearts. You see most of them are striving for sinful and wicked deeds and eating what is unlawful: evil indeed are the things they have been doing. Why do their rabbis and divines not forbid them to say sinful words and to eat unlawful things? It is indeed an evil record of their life-work which they are preparing! 61-63

The Jews say that the hands of Allah are chained[92] — Nay chained indeed are their own hands[93] and accursed they have become because of the blasphemy they utter[94] Allah's hands are free and He expends in whatever way He wills. 64

The fact is that the Message which has been sent down to you from your Lord has rather increased the rebellion and disbelief of many of them[95] : (as a consequence of this) We have cast between them enmity and hatred till the Day of Resurrection. Whenever they kindle the fire of war, Allah extinguishes it; now they are striving to spread mischief in the world but Allah does not like the mischief-makers.

If (instead of this rebellion), the people of the Book had believed and adopted the way of God-fearing, We would have removed their evils from them, and admitted them into the gardens of bliss. Had they observed the Torah and the Gospel and the other Books which had been sent down to them by their Lord, abundance would have been given to them from above and from beneath.[96] Though there are some among them who are righteous, most of them are evil-doers. 65-66

O Messenger, convey to the people whatever has been sent down to you from your Lord; for, if you do not do this, you will not be doing justice to His Message. Allah will protect you from the mischievous deeds of the people. Rest assured that He will not show the disbelievers the way to success (against you). Tell them plainly, "O people of the Book, you have no valid ground to stand on unless you observe the Torah and the Gospel and the other Books which have been sent down to you from your Lord."[97] It is certain that the foregoing decree which has been sent down to you from your Lord, 67-68

will increase all the more the rebellion and disbelief of many of them,[98] but you should not grieve for the disbelievers.

Contd. from p. 463]

They had become so degraded that they began to worship *ṭāghūt*. Therefore they were warned to desist from their opposition to the Muslims who sincerely believed in Allah and followed the Right Way, whereas they themselves were involved in disobedience and indecency and other moral sins of the worst type.

92. According to the Arabic idiom, one whose hands are 'chained' is an excessively parsimonious person. What the Jews meant by this was that Allah had ceased to be bounteous. When they had fallen into the lowest state of degradation for centuries and lost all hope of their national recovery, they used to lament their lost glory and blame Allah for showing niggardliness towards them. The foolish people from among them went so far as to say, "God has become so stingy that He has shut the doors of His treasures against us. He has now nothing left with Him for us except calamities and misfortunes."

This attitude is not peculiar to the Jews alone. The foolish people of other communities also instead of turning to Allah, utter insolent words like these when a calamity befalls them.

93. That is, they themselves have become so niggardly as to become a proverb for parsimony and narrow-mindedness.

94. If they meant to provoke Allah to bounty by their taunts, they miserably failed in their object. On the contrary, they became subject to the curse of Allah in consequence of their insolent and impudent words and were deprived of His blessing and clemency.

95. Instead of producing the desired effect on the Jews, the Word of God fell on deaf ears. So they did not learn any lesson from it but in their obduracy began to oppose the Truth. Instead of redressing their wrong doings and evil deeds and mending their ways, they strove hard to suppress that Voice so that no one else might listen to it. Thus the Word of God that was sent down to Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him) for their own good and the good of humanity produced no good effect upon them but increased the rebellion and disbelief of many of them.

96. This concise sentence refers to a speech of the Prophet Moses contained in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. In this he warned the Israelites in detail: "If you will carefully carry out all His Commands....., then your God will lift you high above all the nations of the earth and all His blessings shall come

upon you", but "If you do not listen to the voice of God and are not mindful of all His commands and rules, ... then shall all sorts of curses, calamities and plagues come upon you.....The Eternal will have you routed in front of your foes."

97. "To observe the Torah and the Gospel" means to follow their teachings sincerely and to follow the code of life laid down in them.

In this connection, one must keep in mind that the Bible contains two kinds of writings. Some portions in it have been interpolated by the Jewish and the Christian scholars. It is obvious that the Qur'ān does not demand the observance of these parts. But there are other portions that have been put down as the Commandments of God or as the sayings of Moses, Jesus and other Prophets (Allah's peace be upon them all). The Qur'ān demands the observance of the latter parts only, for there is no marked difference between the teachings contained in them and those of the Qur'ān. Though even these parts of the Bible have not remained wholly intact and have been tampered with by the translators, the commentators etc., nevertheless, one does feel that they teach the same fundamental principle of *Tauḥīd* that the Qur'ān teaches, present the same creed which the Qur'ān presents, and guides man to the same way of life that has been laid down in the Qur'ān. Thus it is clear that if the Jews and the Christians had been following those teachings which have been attributed to God and their Prophets in the Bible, most surely they would have been a community of righteous people at the time when Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was sent as a Messenger and would have readily recognized that the Qur'ān contained the same Message that was contained in the former Books. In that case they would have felt no difficulty in following the Holy Prophet, for, then, there would have been no question of changing their religion: this would have been a continuation of the same way that they were following before.

98. The foregoing decree enjoined by Allah will increase their rebellion and disbelief because they will not consider it with a cool mind but in their obduracy oppose it more vigorously.

مِنْ رَّبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَّكُفْرًا ۚ فَلَا تَاْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٦٨﴾ اِنَّ
الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَالَّذِيْنَ هَادُوْا وَالصّٰبِـُٔوْنَ وَالنَّصٰرٰى مَنْ اٰمَنَ بِاللّٰهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿٦٩﴾
لَقَدْ اَخَذْنَا مِيْثَاقَ بَنِيْٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ وَاَرْسَلْنَآ اِلَيْهِمْ رُسُلًا ۭ كُلَّمَا
جَآءَهُمْ رَسُوْلٌۢ بِمَا لَا تَهْوٰٓى اَنْفُسُهُمْ ۙ فَرِيْقًا كَذَّبُوْا وَفَرِيْقًا يَّقْتُلُوْنَ ﴿٧٠﴾
وَحَسِبُوْٓا اَلَّا تَكُوْنَ فِتْنَةٌ فَعَمُوْا وَصَمُّوْا ثُمَّ تَابَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ
عَمُوْا وَصَمُّوْا كَثِيْرٌ مِّنْهُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ بَصِيْرٌۢ بِمَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٧١﴾ لَقَدْ كَفَرَ
الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيْحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۭ وَقَالَ الْمَسِيْحُ يٰبَنِيْٓ
اِسْرَآءِيْلَ اعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ رَبِّيْ وَرَبَّكُمْ ۭ اِنَّهٗ مَنْ يُّشْرِكْ بِاللّٰهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ
اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَاْوٰىهُ النَّارُ ۭ وَمَا لِلظّٰلِمِيْنَ مِنْ اَنْصَارٍ ﴿٧٢﴾ لَقَدْ
كَفَرَ الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّ اللّٰهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلٰثَةٍ ۘ وَمَا مِنْ اِلٰهٍ اِلَّآ اِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ ۭ
وَاِنْ لَّمْ يَنْتَهُوْا عَمَّا يَقُوْلُوْنَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ
اَلِيْمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾ اَفَلَا يَتُوْبُوْنَ اِلَى اللّٰهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَهٗ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿٧٤﴾
مَا الْمَسِيْحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اِلَّا رَسُوْلٌ ۚ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ ۭ وَ
اُمُّهٗ صِدِّيْقَةٌ ۭ كَانَا يَاْكُلٰنِ الطَّعَامَ ۭ اُنْظُرْ كَيْفَ نُبَيِّنُ لَهُمُ الْاٰيٰتِ
ثُمَّ انْظُرْ اَنّٰى يُؤْفَكُوْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾ قُلْ اَتَعْبُدُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ مَا لَا يَمْلِكُ
لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَّلَا نَفْعًا ۭ وَاللّٰهُ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿٧٦﴾ قُلْ يٰٓاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ
لَا تَغْلُوْا فِيْ دِيْنِكُمْ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوْٓا اَهْوَاۗءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوْا
مِنْ قَبْلُ وَاَضَلُّوْا كَثِيْرًا وَّضَلُّوْا عَنْ سَوَاۗءِ السَّبِيْلِ ﴿٧٧﴾ لُعِنَ الَّذِيْنَ

(Believe it that none enjoys any privilege): whoever from among the Muslims or the Jews or the Sabaeans or the Christians believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good deeds will have no cause of fear or grief or sorrow.[99] 69

We made a solemn covenant with the children of Israel and sent many Messengers to them; but whenever any Messenger came to them with a thing which was against their desires, they either treated him as a liar or slew him: yet they presumed that no mischief would come of it: they, therefore, became blind and deaf: after this Allah forgave them but again most of them went on behaving even more like the blind and the deaf; Allah has been watching all the evil things they have been doing. 70-71

Most certainly they committed blasphemy, who said, "Allah, He is indeed the Messiah, Mary's son"; whereas the Messiah had said, "O children of Israel, 'worship Allah alone, Who is my Lord and your Lord as well"[99a] Whoever joins a partner with Allah, Allah shall forbid him the Garden, and Hell shall be his abode: and such workers of iniquity shall have no helpers. 72

Most certainly they committed blasphemy, who said, "God is one of the three": whereas there is no deity other than the One Deity. And if these people do not desist from uttering such words, a painful chastisement shall be inflicted on all those from among them who have been guilty of blasphemy. Will they not, then, turn to Allah and ask His pardon? Allah is very Forgiving and Compassionate. 73-74

The Messiah, son of Mary, was no more than a Messenger: many Messengers had already passed away before him. His mother was a righteous woman and they both ate food. Behold! how We make clear to them the signs leading to the Reality, and, again behold, how they are perverted.[100] 75

Say to them, "Do you worship instead of Allah that which has no power to harm nor benefit you? In fact, it is Allah alone Who hears everyone and knows everything." Say, "O people of the Book, do not transgress the bounds of truth in your religion, and do not follow the fancies of those who themselves went astray before you and led astray many others and strayed away from the Right Way."[101] 76-77

99. Please refer to verse 62 and E.N. 80 of Al-Baqarah.

99a. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." (Matthew 4 : 10).

100. This verse repudiates very clearly the Christian doctrine of the divinity of Jesus. If one sincerely wishes to know what he really was, one can judge very easily with the help of the signs given herein that he was no more than a man. The Gospel itself bears witness that he was a human being, and subject to the usual wants and necessities of ordinary persons: he was born of a woman (Mary): he had a genealogical tree like all other human beings: he had a human body which had all the characteristics and limitations of other human bodies: he slept, he ate food and he felt heat and cold: he was even tempted by the devil. These things clearly show that he could not be God nor could he have been a partner with God in His Godhead.

But it is a strange feat of mental perversion that the Christians insist on ascribing Godhead to Jesus inspite of the fact that their own Gospels depict him purely as a human being. This is a clear proof of the fact that they do not believe in the Gospels but in an imaginary Christ whom they themselves have invented and raised to Godhead.

101. This refers to the mis-guided nations from whom the Christians picked up wrong creeds and false ways. The reference is especially to the Greek philosophers whose fancies misled the Christians from the Right Way which had been shown to them at the start. The beliefs of the first followers of the Messiah conformed to a great extent to the reality they themselves had witnessed and to what had been taught to them by their Prophet. But later on the Christians went so much beyond the limits in showing reverence and veneration to the Messiah and were so influenced by the fancies and philosophical interpretations of their beliefs that they invented a new religion that had nothing in common with the real teachings of the Messiah. In this connection, the following extracts from Jesus Christ, by the Rev. Charles Anderson Scott *(Encyclopaedia Britannica,* Fourteenth Edition) are worth reading :--

"Apart from the Birth stories at the opening of Matthew, Mark and Luke (the exact significance of which in this respect is ambiguous) there is nothing in these three Gospels to suggest that their writers thought of Jesus as other than human, a human being specially endued with the spirit of God and standing in an unbroken relation to God which justified His being spoken of as the "Son of God". Even Matthew refers to him as a carpenter's son and records that after Peter had acknowledged Him as Messiah he "took him and began to rebuke Him" (Matt. XVI. 22). And in Luke the two disciples on the way to Emmaus can still speak of

Him as "a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people" (Luke, XXIV. 19). It is very singular that inspite of the fact that before Mark was composed, "the Lord" had become the description of Jesus common among Christians; he is never so described in the second Gospel (nor yet in the first, though the word is freely used to refer to God). All three relate the Passion of Jesus with a fulness and emphasis of its great significance, but except the "ransom" passage (Mark, X. 45) and certain words at the Last Supper, there is no indication of the meaning which was afterwards attached to it. It is not even suggested that the death of Jesus had any relation to sin or forgiveness. Had the "ransom" saying been suggested by Paul, it would not stand as it does in its isolated vagueness."

The same author says, "That He ranked Himself as a Prophet appears from a few passages such as 'I have to go on my way today, tomorrow or day after tomorrow, because it cannot be that a Prophet perish out of Jerusalem." (Luke, 13 : 33) He frequently referred to himself as "the Son of Man."..... "Jesus never refers to Himself as the "Son of God", and the title when bestowed upon Him by others probably involves no more than the acknowledgement that He was the Messiah. But He does describe himself "as the Son" absolutely.....Moreover, he uses the word "Father" in the same absolute way to define His relationship to God. It is conceivable that He did not always realise the uniqueness of this relationship, that in early life He thought of the privilege as one which He shared with other men, but that experience of life and deeper knowledge of human nature forced upon Him the discovery that in this He stood alone."

"Certain words of Peter spoken at the time of Pentecost, 'A man approved of God,' describe Jesus as He was known and regarded by His contemporaries.....The Gospels leave no room for doubt as to the completeness with which these statements are to be accepted. From them we learn that Jesus passed through the natural stages of development, physical and mental, that He hungered, thirsted, was weary and slept, that He could be surprised and require information, that He suffered pain and died. He not only made no claim to omniscience, He distinctly waived it. Indeed any claim to omniscience would be not only inconsistent with the whole impression created by the Gospels, it could not be reconciled with the cardinal experiences of the Temptation, of Gethsemane and of Calvary. Unless such experiences were to be utterly unreal, Jesus must have entered into them and passed through them under the ordinary limitations of human knowledge, subject only to such modifications of human knowledge as might be due to prophetic insight or the sure vision of God. There is still less reason to predicate omnipotence of Jesus. There is no indication that He ever acted independently of God, or as an independent God. Rather does He acknowledge dependence upon God, by His habit of prayer and in such words as "this kind

goeth not forth save by prayer". He even repudiates the ascription to Himself of goodness in the absolute sense in which it belongs to God alone. It is a remarkable testimony to the truly historical character of these Gospels that though they were not finally set down until the Christian Church had begun to look up to the risen Christ as to a Divine Being, the records on the one hand preserve all the evidence of His true humanity and on the other nowhere suggest that He thought of Himself as God....."

"It may not be possible to decide whether it was the primitive community or Paul himself who first put fully religious content into the title "Lord" as used of Christ. Probably it was the former. But the Apostle undoubtedly adopted the title in its full meaning and did much to make that meaning clear by transferring to "the Lord Jesus Christ" many of the ideas and phrases which in the Old Testament had been specifically assigned to the Lord Jehovah. He gave unto him that name that is above every name — the name of "Lord." At the same time by equating Christ with the Wisdom of God and with Glory of God, as well as ascribing to Him Sonship in an absolute sense, Paul claimed for Jesus Christ a relation to God which was inherent and unique, ethical and personal, eternal. While, however, Paul in many ways and in many aspects, equated Christ with God, he definitely stopped short of speaking of him as God....." (Pages 22-25, *Enc. Brit.*, Vol. 13, 1946).

The moulds of thought (of Trinity) are those of Greek philosophy and into these were run the Jewish teachings. We have thus a peculiar combination — the religious doctrines of the Bible, as culminating in the person of Jesus, run through the forms of alien philosophy....."

For the Doctrine of Trinity, "The Jewish source furnished the terms Father, Son and Spirit. Jesus seldom employed the last term and Paul's use of it is not altogether clear. Already in Jewish literature it has been all but personified. Thus the material is Jewish, though already doubtless modified by Greek influence: but the problem is Greek; it is not primarily ethical nor even religious but it is metaphysical. What is the ontological relationship between these three factors? The answer of the Church is given in the Nicene formula, which is characteristically Greek....."

(*Enc. Britannica*, Vol. 5, page 633 last line, Article "Christianity")

In the same connection, the following passage from "Church History" (*Enc. Britannica*, Vol 5, Copy Right 1946) is also worth reading:

"The recognition of Christ as the incarnation of the "logos" was practically universal before the close of the 3rd century, but His deity was still widely denied and the Arian controversy which distracted the Church of the 4th

century concerned the latter question. At the council of Nicaea in 325 the deity of Christ received official sanction and was given formulation in the original Nicene creed. Controversy continued for some time, but finally the Nicene decision was recognised both in East and West as the only orthodox faith. The deity of the Son was believed to carry with it that of the Spirit, who was associated with Father and Son in the baptismal formula and in the current symbols and so the victory of the Nicene Christology meant the recognition of the doctrine of the Trinity as a part of orthodox faith.

"The assertion of the deity of the Son incarnate in Christ raised another problem which constituted the subject of dispute in the Christological controversies of the 4th and following centuries. What is the relation of the divine and human natures in Christ? At the council of Chalcedon in 451 it was declared that in the person of Christ are united two complete natures, divine and human, which retain after the union all their properties unchanged. This was supplemented at the third council of Constantinople in 680 by the statement that each of the natures contains a will, so that Christ possesses two wills. The Western Church accepted the decisions of Nicaea, Chalcedon and Constantinople and so the doctrines of the Trinity and of the two natures in Christ were handed down as orthodox dogma in West as well as East.....

"Meanwhile in the Western Church the subject of sin and grace and the relation of divine and human activity in salvation, received special attention and finally, at the 2nd Council of Orange in 529, after both Pelagianism and semi-Pelagianism had been repudiated, a moderate form of Augustinianism was adopted, involving the theory that every man as a result of the Fall is in such a condition that he can take no steps in the direction of salvation until he has been renewed by the divine grace given in baptism, and that he cannot continue in the good thus begun except by the constant assistance of that grace which is mediated only by the Catholic Church". (Page 677-678).

It has become very clear from the above quotations from Christian Scholars that the first thing which misled the Christians was their exaggerated credulity. Accordingly, they went beyond the limits in their reverence and love of Christ. That is why they began to apply epithets like "Lord" and "Son of God" to Jesus Christ (Allah's peace be upon him) and to ascribe Divine Attributes to him and to invent the Doctrine of Atonement, when, in fact, there was absolutely no room, for such things in his teachings. Afterwards when they came under the influence of philosophy, they began to put forward interpretations to justify the errors of their former religious leaders and went on inventing new creeds, one after the other, in utter disregard of the real teachings of Jesus Christ, merely on

[Contd. on p. 475

كَفَرُوْا مِنْۢ بَنِيْٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ عَلٰى لِسَانِ دَاوٗدَ وَعِيْسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۭ ذٰلِكَ
بِمَا عَصَوْا وَّكَانُوْا يَعْتَدُوْنَ ۝ كَانُوْا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْ مُّنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوْهُ ۭ
لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوْا يَفْعَلُوْنَ ۝ تَرٰى كَثِيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا ۭ
لَبِئْسَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لَهُمْ اَنْفُسُهُمْ اَنْ سَخِطَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَفِي الْعَذَابِ
هُمْ خٰلِدُوْنَ ۝ وَلَوْ كَانُوْا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالنَّبِيِّ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْهِ مَا
اتَّخَذُوْهُمْ اَوْلِيَاۗءَ وَلٰكِنَّ كَثِيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ فٰسِقُوْنَ ۝ لَتَجِدَنَّ اَشَدَّ
النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِّلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا الْيَهُوْدَ وَالَّذِيْنَ اَشْرَكُوْا ۚ وَلَتَجِدَنَّ
اَقْرَبَهُمْ مَّوَدَّةً لِّلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّا نَصٰرٰى ۭ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّ
مِنْهُمْ قِسِّيْسِيْنَ وَرُهْبَانًا وَّاَنَّهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُوْنَ ۝

الجزء ٧

وَاِذَا سَمِعُوْا مَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَى الرَّسُوْلِ تَرٰٓى اَعْيُنَهُمْ تَفِيْضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ

مِمَّا عَرَفُوْا مِنَ الْحَقِّ ۚ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَآ اٰمَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشّٰهِدِيْنَ ۝
وَمَا لَنَا لَا نُؤْمِنُ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَا جَاۗءَنَا مِنَ الْحَقِّ ۙ وَنَطْمَعُ اَنْ يُّدْخِلَنَا
رَبُّنَا مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ۝ فَاَثَابَهُمُ اللّٰهُ بِمَا قَالُوْا جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ۭ وَذٰلِكَ جَزَاۗءُ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ۝ وَالَّذِيْنَ
كَفَرُوْا وَكَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَآ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ اَصْحٰبُ الْجَحِيْمِ ۝ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا
لَا تُحَرِّمُوْا طَيِّبٰتِ مَآ اَحَلَّ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوْا ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْمُعْتَدِيْنَ ۝ وَكُلُوْا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللّٰهُ حَلٰلًا طَيِّبًا ۠ وَّاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْٓ
اَنْتُمْ بِهٖ مُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝ لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللّٰهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِيْٓ اَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلٰكِنْ
يُّؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا عَقَّدْتُّمُ الْاَيْمَانَ ۚ فَكَفَّارَتُهٗٓ اِطْعَامُ عَشَرَةِ مَسٰكِيْنَ

78-81 Those who adopted the way of disbelief from among the children of Israel were cursed by the tongue of David and of Jesus, Mary's son, because they had grown rebellious and become transgressors: they would not forbid one another to do the wrong deeds they committed;[102] evil was the way they had adopted. Today you see many of them who take the side of the disbelievers (against the Believers). Indeed it is an evil end to which their souls have prompted them: for they have incurred the wrath of Allah and they are going to suffer eternal torment. Had they believed in Allah and the Prophet and in what was revealed to him, they would never have made friends with the disbelievers[103] (against the Believers), but many of them have become disobedient to Allah.

82-86 You will find that the most hostile of all people in their enmity to the Believers are the Jews and the *mushriks;* and you will find that the nearest in friendliness to the Believers are those, who say, "We are Christians." This is because there are among them some pious scholars and monks and because they are free from pride. When they listen to that which has been sent down to the Messenger, you see their eyes overflow with tears because of the Truth they recognize therein. They spontaneously say, "Our Lord, we have believed; therefore, write down our names with those who bear witness to it." And they say, "Why should we not believe in Allah and accept the Truth that has come to us, when we are eager that our Lord may count us with the righteous people?" And, for these words of theirs, Allah rewarded them with the Gardens underneath which canals flow, wherein they will live for ever. This is the reward of the righteous people. As for those who rejected Our Revelations and treated them as false, they deserve Hell.

87-88 O Believers, do not make unlawful those pure things which Allah has made lawful for you,[104] and do not go beyond the limit;[105] indeed Allah does not like the transgressors. Eat easefully of the lawful and pure things which Allah has provided you, and refrain from disobeying Allah in Whom you have believed.

Contd. from p. 473]

the strength of Philosophy and Logic, whereas the right thing for them would have been to turn to the real teachings of Christ.

It is against such wrong beliefs that the Qur'ān warns in vv. 72-77.

102. The corruption of the children of Israel took place according to the universal process. At first some individuals of a community become corrupt, and if the collective conscience of the community is alive, the public opinion keeps them suppressed, and the community, as a whole, is saved from corruption. But, on the other hand, if the community connives at their evil ways, and leaves them free to do as they like, by and by, that corruption which was at first confined only to some individuals, spreads in the whole community. The same thing happened in the case of the children of Israel.

As to the curse by the tongue of the Prophets David and Jesus, please refer to Psalms 10 and 50 and Matthew 23.

103. If the Jews had been sincere believers in God, Prophethood and Revelation, they would naturally have taken the side of the Muslims, who were believers in these teachings. But the Jews were a strange sort of believers in the Book: they sided with the *mushriks* against the Believers in the battle between the Unity of God and *shirk*. Moreover, they professed to believe in Prophethood, but took the side of those who did not believe in it. Still they shame-facedly declared that they were believers in God, Prophets and the Books.

104. This Divine Commandment implies two things. First, "You have no authority to make certain things lawful and others unlawful. Lawful is only that which Allah has made lawful and unlawful is that which Allah has made unlawful. Therefore if you make a lawful thing unlawful, and *vice versa*, you will be following your own law and not the Divine Law." Secondly, "You should not adopt the way of asceticism like the Christian monks or the Hindu friars or the Buddhist mendicants and the like." This was meant to warn the Muslims against the general tendency, which has always existed among the religious-minded people, to consider even the normal satiation of the desires of the body and mind to be against spiritual progress. They imagine that self-torture, self-denial and abstinence are virtues in themselves and that one could not approach God without these austerities. As a matter of fact, there were some Companions, who had developed such tendencies. When the Holy Prophet came to know that some of his Companions had taken vows that they would always observe fast during the day and would not go to bed for sleep but keep awake and worship God the whole night, and would abstain from flesh, fat and women, he forbade them from such practices. He said, "I have not ordained such things; your own self has rights on you; therefore observe fast and also eat easefully. Stand in worship at night and also go to sleep. I myself sometimes observe fast and at others I do not. I eat flesh and butter. (This is my way) and the one who does not like my way, is not of me."

According to another Tradition, he emphasised the same and said, "How is it that some people have made unlawful for themselves women, good food, scents and perfumes, sleep and other good things of the world? As for me I have not taught you to become monks and hermits. The way of life taught by me does neither allow abstention from women nor from eating flesh nor retirement and seclusion from the world. The Law has prescribed Fasting for self-discipline, and *Jihād* for the same benefits that might be obtained from asceticism. Worship Allah and associate none with Him as partner, perform Ḥajj and 'Umrah, establish the *Ṣalāt* and pay *Zakāt* and observe the Fasts during the month of Ramadān. The people who were doomed before you, were doomed because they practised austerity of their own accord, and when they did so, Allah also prescribed the same for them. Those are of them whom you now see in the Monasteries.

In the same connection, we learn from some Traditions that when the Holy Prophet came to know that a certain Companion had been abstaining from having conjugal relations with his wife for a long time and had been devoting himself to worship, he immediately sent for him and ordered, "Go to your wife instantly." The Companion replied, "I am with fast" The Prophet again said, "Break the fast and go to your wife."

There is another instance of the same kind. A woman came to Caliph 'Umar and complained, "My husband observes fast during the day and passes the night in worship and does not have conjugal relations with me." Ḥaḍrat 'Umar ordered Ka'b bin Saur al-Azdi to hear the case. He decreed that the husband was permitted to pass three nights in worship but he must go to his wife on the fourth night.

105. "To go beyond the limits" has very extensive meanings. One goes beyond the limits, if one makes lawful things unlawful or abstains from things which Allah has declared to be pure as if they were impure or if one is extravagant in the use of pure things, or if one makes use of unlawful things as if they were lawful. Allah does not like such acts of transgression.

مِنْ اَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعِمُوْنَ اَهْلِيْكُمْ اَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ اَوْ تَحْرِيْرُ رَقَبَةٍ ؕ فَمَنْ
لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلٰثَةِ اَيَّامٍ ؕ ذٰلِكَ كَفَّارَةُ اَيْمَانِكُمْ اِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ ؕ وَ
احْفَظُوْٓا اَيْمَانَكُمْ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿٨٩﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا
الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَ الْمَيْسِرُ وَ الْاَنْصَابُ وَ الْاَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ
عَمَلِ الشَّيْطٰنِ فَاجْتَنِبُوْهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿٩٠﴾ اِنَّمَا يُرِيْدُ الشَّيْطٰنُ اَنْ
يُّوْقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَ الْبَغْضَآءَ فِى الْخَمْرِ وَ الْمَيْسِرِ وَ يَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ
ذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ وَ عَنِ الصَّلٰوةِ ۚ فَهَلْ اَنْتُمْ مُّنْتَهُوْنَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَ اَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَ اَطِيْعُوا
الرَّسُوْلَ وَ احْذَرُوْا ۚ فَاِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّمَا عَلٰى رَسُوْلِنَا الْبَلٰغُ
الْمُبِيْنُ ﴿٩٢﴾ لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ عَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ جُنَاحٌ فِيْمَا طَعِمُوْٓا
اِذَا مَا اتَّقَوْا وَّ اٰمَنُوْا وَ عَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَّ اٰمَنُوْا ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا
وَّ اَحْسَنُوْا ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿٩٣﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَيَبْلُوَنَّكُمُ
اللّٰهُ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الصَّيْدِ تَنَالُهٗٓ اَيْدِيْكُمْ وَ رِمَاحُكُمْ لِيَعْلَمَ اللّٰهُ مَنْ
يَّخَافُهٗ بِالْغَيْبِ ۚ فَمَنِ اعْتَدٰى بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ فَلَهٗ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ﴿٩٤﴾ يٰٓاَيُّهَا
الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ وَ اَنْتُمْ حُرُمٌ ؕ وَ مَنْ قَتَلَهٗ مِنْكُمْ مُّتَعَمِّدًا
فَجَزَآءٌ مِّثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ النَّعَمِ يَحْكُمُ بِهٖ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنْكُمْ هَدْيًۢا
بٰلِغَ الْكَعْبَةِ اَوْ كَفَّارَةٌ طَعَامُ مَسٰكِيْنَ اَوْ عَدْلُ ذٰلِكَ صِيَامًا لِّيَذُوْقَ
وَبَالَ اَمْرِهٖ ؕ عَفَا اللّٰهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَ ؕ وَ مَنْ عَادَ فَيَنْتَقِمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْهُ ؕ وَ
اللّٰهُ عَزِيْزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ ﴿٩٥﴾ اُحِلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ وَ طَعَامُهٗ مَتَاعًا لَّكُمْ
وَ لِلسَّيَّارَةِ ۚ وَ حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَرِّ مَا دُمْتُمْ حُرُمًا ؕ وَ اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ

Allah does not take you to task for the inadvertent oaths you swear, but He will surely call you to account for the intentional and deliberate oaths you make. The expiation (of breaking such an oath) is to feed ten indigent persons with the normal food you serve in your own family, or to give them clothes, or to free one slave, and the one who cannot afford any of these let him fast three days. This is the expiation of breaking the solemn oaths you have taken;[106] be mindful of your oaths.[107] Thus Allah makes His Commandments plain to you so that you may show gratitude. 89

O Believers, wine, gambling, (ungodly) shrines and divining devices are all abominable works of Satan:[108] therefore refrain from these so that you may attain to true success.[109] Indeed Satan intends to sow enmity and hatred among you by means of wine and gambling, and to prevent you from the remembrance of Allah and from *Ṣalāt*. Will you not, therefore, abstain from these things? Obey Allah and His Messenger and abstain from these things; but if you disobeyed, note it well that Our Messenger's only responsibility was to convey the Message clearly. 90-92

Those, who have believed and done good deeds, shall not be called to account for whatever they might have eaten in the past, provided that they abstain in future from those things that have been made unlawful, and remain steadfast in their Faith, and do good works: then restrain themselves from whatever they are forbidden and believe in the Divine Law: then fear Allah and adopt the righteous attitude, for Allah likes those who do righteous deeds. 93

O Believers, Allah will put you to a hard trial by that game which will come within the very reach of your hands or lances, in order to see who fears Him even though He is invisible: there shall, therefore, be a painful punishment for those who transgress the limits after this warning. O Believers, do not kill game while you are in the state of *iḥrām*.[110] And, whoever of you kills an animal intentionally, he shall have to make an offering of a head of cattle equivalent to it, which will be decided by two just men from among you. This offering shall have to be sent to the Ka'bah or, failing this, he shall have to feed indigent people by way of expiation or compensate for it by equivalent fasting,[111] so that he may taste the evil consequence of what he did. Allah has forgiven what has gone before, but if anyone repeats 94-95

the same, Allah will inflict retribution on him; Allah is All-Mighty and All-Powerful to inflict retribution.

96 Game of the sea and its use as food has been made lawful for you;[112] you may eat it at your halting place and also use it as a provision for the caravan, but the game of the land has been prohibited so long as you are in the state of *iḥrām*. So refrain from the disobedience of that Allah before Whom you shall all be mustered together.

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106. The Commandment about oaths has been laid down here in connection with instructions about food, because some people had taken oaths of making some lawful things unlawful for themselves. The Commandment is that if one uttered a word of oath without any intention behind it, one shall not be bound to observe it; for there is no punishment or expiation for this. But if one has deliberately taken such an oath, one must break it and expiate the violation because one must abrogate such a sinful oath. (Please also refer to E.N.'s 243 and 244 of Al-Baqarah and E.N. 125 of An-Nisā).

107. "Being mindful of an oath" implies three things. First, one should make the right use of an oath and should not take it for useless and sinful things. Secondly, when one takes an oath for anything, one should remember it lest one should forget it and violate it. Thirdly, if one takes a deliberate oath to do a right thing, one must fulfil it, and if one violates it, one should expiate the sin.

108. Please refer to E.N.'s 12 and 14 of this Sūrah for the meaning of *ansāb* (ungodly shrines), *azlām* (methods of divination) and *maisar* (gambling). Though *azlām*, divination, is in its very nature a form of gambling, there is a slight difference between it and *maisar*. *Azlām* applies to those forms of divination and casting of lots, which are tinged with *shirk* and superstition and *maisar* applies to all those forms by which wealth is acquired or divided by devices of chance.

109. In this verse four things have been made absolutely unlawful. They are wine, gambling, ungodly shrines (which are dedicated to the worship of others than Allah and in which sacrifices are made and offerings given in the name of others than Allah) and divining devices. The nature of the last three has already been explained. Here are the details of the Commandment about wine.

Before making wine absolutely unlawful in this verse, two other Commandments concerning its prohibition had already been given in Al-Baqarah, II: 219 and An-Nisā, IV: 43. Before this last Commandment was given, the Holy Prophet addressed the people in order to prepare them for its absolute prohibition. He warned and said, "Allah does not like at all that people should drink wine.

Probably absolute prohibition will soon be prescribed: therefore those who possess wine are advised to sell it." Some time after this, when verse 90 was sent down he declared, "Now those who possess wine, can neither drink it nor sell it; they should, therefore, throw it away." Accordingly it was spilt in the streets of Madinah to run wastefully. Some people, however, asked the Holy Prophet, "May we give it as a present to the Jews?" He replied, "The One Who has made it unlawful has also forbidden to give it as a present." Others asked, "May we convert it into vinegar?" He replied, "No, you must spill it." Another asked again and again, "Is one permitted to use wine as medicine?" The Holy Prophet emphatically rejected this also and said, "No, it is not a medicine but a disease." Yet another asked, "Sir, we live in a place, which is very cold, and we have to do tiresome labour. So we drink wine to refresh ourselves from fatigue and to keep warm in the cold." He asked, "Is what you drink intoxicant?" The man replied, "Yes." The Holy Prophet replied, "Then refrain from it." At this the man said, "The people of our part of the country will not submit to this." He replied, "If they do not submit to this, then go to war with them."

According to a Tradition related by Ibn 'Umar, the Holy Prophet declared, "Allah has cursed wine and the one who drinks it and the one who serves it and the one who sells it and the one who buys it and the one who extracts it and the one who has it extracted and the one who carried it and the one for whom it is carried."

According to another Tradition the Holy Prophet prohibited the Muslims from eating the food which is served alongwith wine. In the initial stage of the prohibition, he forbade even the use of those utensils which were employed for extracting wine or for drinking it. Afterwards when the prohibition had become thoroughly effective, the use of such utensils was permitted.

Though originally the Arabic word *khamr* meant only wine made from grapes, and it was also applied to the liquors made from wheat, barley, dried grapes, dates and honey, the Holy Prophet applied the prohibition to all the intoxicants, and there are Traditions that clearly support this. For instance, "Every intoxicant is *khamr* and is unlawful." "Every drink that intoxicates is unlawful." "I prohibit every intoxicant." In one of his Friday sermons, the Caliph 'Umar defined *khamr* as everything that dulls the faculty of thinking.

In this connection, the Holy Prophet laid down the general principle : if a large dose of something is intoxicant, then its smallest dose also is unlawful, and if a cup of anything is intoxicant, then a drop of it also is unlawful.

During the time of the Holy Prophet, there was no fixed punishment for a

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الَّذِیْٓ اِلَیْهِ تُحْشَرُوْنَ ﴿96﴾ جَعَلَ اللّٰهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْبَیْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِیٰمًا لِّلنَّاسِ
وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَالْهَدْیَ وَالْقَلَآىِٕدَ ؕ ذٰلِكَ لِتَعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ یَعْلَمُ مَا
فِی السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِی الْاَرْضِ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ بِكُلِّ شَیْءٍ عَلِیْمٌ ﴿97﴾ اِعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ
اللّٰهَ شَدِیْدُ الْعِقَابِ ۙ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِیْمٌ ﴿98﴾ مَا عَلَی الرَّسُوْلِ اِلَّا الْبَلٰغُ ؕ
وَاللّٰهُ یَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُوْنَ وَمَا تَكْتُمُوْنَ ﴿99﴾ قُلْ لَّا یَسْتَوِی الْخَبِیْثُ وَالطَّیِّبُ
وَلَوْ اَعْجَبَكَ كَثْرَةُ الْخَبِیْثِ ۚ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ یٰۤاُولِی الْاَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿100﴾ یٰۤاَیُّهَا الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَسْـَٔلُوْا عَنْ اَشْیَآءَ اِنْ تُبْدَ لَكُمْ تَسُؤْكُمْ ۚ
وَاِنْ تَسْـَٔلُوْا عَنْهَا حِیْنَ یُنَزَّلُ الْقُرْاٰنُ تُبْدَ لَكُمْ ؕ عَفَا اللّٰهُ عَنْهَا ؕ
وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ حَلِیْمٌ ﴿101﴾ قَدْ سَاَلَهَا قَوْمٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِكُمْ ثُمَّ اَصْبَحُوْا بِهَا
كٰفِرِیْنَ ﴿102﴾ مَا جَعَلَ اللّٰهُ مِنْۢ بَحِیْرَةٍ وَّلَا سَآىِٕبَةٍ وَّلَا وَصِیْلَةٍ وَّلَا
حَامٍ ۙ وَّلٰكِنَّ الَّذِیْنَ كَفَرُوْا یَفْتَرُوْنَ عَلَی اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ ؕ وَاَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا
یَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿103﴾ وَاِذَا قِیْلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا اِلٰی مَاۤ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ وَاِلَی الرَّسُوْلِ
قَالُوْا حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَیْهِ اٰبَآءَنَا ؕ اَوَلَوْ كَانَ اٰبَآؤُهُمْ لَا یَعْلَمُوْنَ
شَیْـًٔا وَّلَا یَهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿104﴾ یٰۤاَیُّهَا الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا عَلَیْكُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ ۚ لَا یَضُرُّكُمْ
مَّنْ ضَلَّ اِذَا اهْتَدَیْتُمْ ؕ اِلَی اللّٰهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِیْعًا فَیُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ
تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿105﴾ یٰۤاَیُّهَا الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا شَهَادَةُ بَیْنِكُمْ اِذَا حَضَرَ اَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ
حِیْنَ الْوَصِیَّةِ اثْنٰنِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنْكُمْ اَوْ اٰخَرٰنِ مِنْ غَیْرِكُمْ اِنْ اَنْتُمْ
ضَرَبْتُمْ فِی الْاَرْضِ فَاَصَابَتْكُمْ مُّصِیْبَةُ الْمَوْتِ ؕ تَحْبِسُوْنَهُمَا مِنْۢ بَعْدِ
الصَّلٰوةِ فَیُقْسِمٰنِ بِاللّٰهِ اِنِ ارْتَبْتُمْ لَا نَشْتَرِیْ بِهٖ ثَمَنًا وَّلَوْ كَانَ

Allah has made the sacred House of the Ka'bah a means of stabilising the (community) life of the people ; the sacred month and the animal offerings and the animals which are collared as a mark of dedication (have also been made conducive to the same object)[113] so that you may know that Allah is fully aware of all that is in the heavens and the earth and that He has perfect knowledge of everything. [114] Note it well that Allah is very severe in punishing, and at the same time He is very Forbearing and Merciful. The only duty of the Messenger is to convey the Message ; Allah knows whatever you disclose and whatever you hide. Tell them, O Messenger, that the pure and the impure cannot be alike anyhow, although the abundance of the impure may allure you much.[115] So, O people of understanding, refrain from the disobedience of Allah : it is expected that you will attain to true success. 97-100

O Believers, do not ask questions concerning such things, which, if made known to you, would only vex you ;[116] but, if you will ask such questions at the time when the Qur'ān is being sent down, they will be made known to you. Allah has forgiven what you have done so far : for He is Forgiving and Forbearing. Some people before you asked such questions : then they were involved in disbelief because of those very things.[117] 101-102

Allah has ordained neither *Baḥīrah* nor *Sāi'bah* nor *Waṣīlah* nor *Ḥāmī*[118] but the unbelievers have invented a falsehood against Allah, and most of them lack understanding (so they believe in such superstitions). And when it is said to them, "Come to the Law which Allah has sent down and to the Messenger," they reply, "Sufficient for us is the way on which we found our forefathers." What! will they go on following their forefathers, even if they knew nothing, and were quite ignorant of the Right Way ? 103-104

O Believers, look after your own souls ; it can do no harm to you, if anyone else goes astray, provided that you yourselves are on the right path.[119] To Allah shall you all return : then He will let you know what you have been doing. 105

O Believers, when the time of death approaches anyone of you, and he is going to make his will, the principle of evidence is that two just men[120] from among you should act as witnesses. Or, if you are on 106

a journey and the calamity of death befalls you there, the two witnesses may be taken from among the non Muslims.[121] Then, if you have any doubt, both the witnesses should be detained (in the mosque) after the Prayer, and they should testify upon oath by Allah, "We are not going to sell our evidence for any personal benefit, and even though he be our own relative, (we will not be partial to him) ; we are not going to hide evidence which we are giving for the sake of Allah : for we shall be sinners if we do so."

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drunkard. The culprit, who was arrested and brought for trial, was beaten with shoes, kicked, given blows and thrashed with sticks and ropes. Forty stripes were the maximum punishment given for this crime. The same was the punishment during the time of Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr and the early days of Caliph 'Umar. But when the latter saw that the crime was on the increase, he in consultation with the other Companions laid down eighty stripes for this.

Imām Mālik and Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and, according to a Tradition, Imām Shāfi'ī also, were of the same opinion. But Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal and, according to another Tradition, Imām Shāfi'ī also, were of the opinion that forty stripes should be inflicted for the crime of drinking. Hadrat 'Alī also considered forty stripes to be the punishment for it.

According to the *Sharī'at,* it is the duty of the Islamic State to enforce prohibition. That is why during the time of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, the shop of a man, named Ruvaishid, who belonged to the clan of Banī-Thaqīf, was burnt by his order, because wine was secretly sold there. On another occasion a whole village was burnt down on the orders of Ḥadrat 'Umar, for the crime that wine was secretly extracted and sold there.

110. It is forbidden to hunt game or to help another to hunt it in any way whatsoever, while one is in the pilgrim's garments or in the sacred precincts. It is also unlawful for one in this state to eat of the game that has been specifically killed for him. If, however, someone else, not in this state, kills a game for himself and then gives a part of it to a pilgrim as a present, there is no harm for the latter to eat it. Of course, the harmful animals are an exception to this prohibition. One is permitted to kill a snake, scorpion, mad dog or any other harmful animal, even when one is under the restrictions imposed on a pilgrim.

111. Those two just men will also decide how many indigent persons are to be fed, or how many fasts are to be observed, for killing a certain animal.

112. Game from the sea has been made lawful because sometimes when provisions run short on a sea journey, there is nothing else close at hand to eat.

113. For Arabia, the Ka'bah was not merely a sacred place of worship, but it occupied a central position in the country and because of this and of its sanctity, it was the means of stabilising its economy and culture. The people from all over the country came there to perform Hajj and 'Umrah and the huge gathering helped to create the feeling of unity among the Arabs who were otherwise torn by clannish strifes. The pilgrims who came from different clans and places met together and established cultural relations. Poetic contests helped to make their language and literature rich. Trade and commerce which were transacted on the occasion helped to satisfy the economic needs of the people. The sacred months provided peace to the Arabs for four months and this was the only period during which their caravans could travel in security from one part of the country to the other. The animals dedicated to sacrifice and the collars round their necks proved very helpful to the movements of the caravans, for the Arabs showed so much reverence for them that none dared touch them with the intention of robbery.

114. That is, "If you just think deeply about the wisdom contained in the sanctity of the Ka'bah and the restrictions laid down for the pilgrimage to it and the benefits accruing from it, you yourselves would be convinced that Allah, Who has prescribed these, has deep and perfect knowledge of the welfare and needs of His creatures. You will realize that each one of His Commandments is very beneficial for different aspects of human life. Even during the centuries of chaos before the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace), Allah had made the Ka'bah a means of security and stability for your national life though you yourselves were senselessly bent upon destroying it. In the same way, Commandments of Allah guaranteed your own security and welfare; therefore you should, for your own good observe these, for there are hidden benefits in them that you can neither foresee nor obtain by your own devices."

115. This verse sets up a new standard of values, which is quite different from the standard of those who look only at the outward aspect of things. Such people usually judge things by their quantity and not by their quality. For instance, one hundred rupees are always considered greater in value than five rupees by one who does not attach any value to the means by which these might have been obtained. But contrary to this evaluation, this verse declares that if these one hundred rupees have been obtained by unfair means and those five rupees earned by fair means, then the former are less in worth because of their impurity than the latter because of their purity. According to this standard, it is not the number or the quantity of a thing that increases or decreases its true worth but the question

whether it has been obtained by fair means or foul. Obviously, a drop of rose scent has greater value than a heap of filth and a cup of pure water is far greater in worth than a cistern full of impure urine. Therefore one who is really wise will always remain content with the lawful, though it may appear to be very insignificant and worthless, and will never try to grab the unlawful, though it might appear to be very alluring and grand.

116. This verse forbids people to ask useless and unnecessary questions because some people used to put such questions to the Holy Prophet as were of no practical good for mundane affairs nor for spiritual up-lift. For example, once a certain person while sitting in a gathering asked him, "Who is my real father?" Likewise, sometimes, some people put unnecessary questions concerning legal matters so as to get these defined, whereas they had been purposely kept undefined for the good of the people. For example, when Ḥajj was made obligatory by a commandment in the Qur'ān a certain person heard it, and instantly asked, "Has it been made obligatory to perform Ḥajj every year?" The Holy Prophet did not make any reply. The man repeated the question, but he again kept quiet. When the man put the question for the third time, he replied, "Woe to you! If I had said: 'Yes', the performance of Ḥajj every year would have become obligatory and people like you would have been unable to perform it and been guilty of disobedience."

The Holy Prophet himself forbade people to ask questions for the sake of it and to probe into things aimlessly. In a Tradition he warned, "The worst offender against the Muslims is the person who asked a question about something that had not been made unlawful but was made so because of his question." In another Tradition he said, "Allah has prescribed some obligatory duties for you; let not these go unfulfilled, and He has made certain things unlawful, so do not go near them. He has prescribed certain limits, do not transgress them. He has been silent concerning certain things, but not because He has forgotten them; so do not try to probe into such things."

In these two Traditions a warning has been served against a very serious matter. There are certain things and commandments which have been left vague and without details. This is not because the Law-giver had forgotten to give details or to make them specific but because He did not intend to limit these in order to leave a wide scope for the people. Therefore if a person goes on creating one issue after the other, by putting unnecessary and useless questions and thus creates limitations and specifications, he puts the people to unnecessary trouble. Likewise if he tries to deduce the details by the force of his "reasoning", and does not rest content till he has made the vague things specific and the indefinite definite, he in reality puts the Muslims in a very awkward position. This is because the more

details we offer for the Unseen and the Next World, the more will be the chances for creating doubts about them and, likewise, the more limitations are imposed concerning the Commandments, the greater will be the chance for their violation.

117. The people, who were involved in disbelief because they asked useless and unnecessary questions, were the Jews. At first they were involved in hairsplitting, which led them to put unnecessary questions about the details of the Faith and the Commandments. Consequently, they helped to impose upon themselves such restrictions as they could not observe and so became guilty of disobedience and disbelief. What a pity that the Muslims are following the Jews, step by step, in spite of these warnings by the Qur'ān and the Holy Prophet!

118. In this verse the superstitious practice of dedicating animals to idols, graves, gods or saints, and leaving them to roam about and graze at liberty has been condemned. In the pre-Islamic Arabia, they gave different names to such animals and marked them off, and considered it unlawful to take any service from them or slaughter them for food or derive any benefit from them in any way.

Baḥīrah was the name given to a she-camel which had five young ones, the last of which was a he-camel. Her ear was then split and she was turned loose to roam at liberty. After this, none would ride her nor drink her milk nor slaughter her nor shear her hair. She was allowed to graze in any field and pasture and drink from any watering place.

Sā'ibah was the name given to that he-camel or she-camel which was let loose as a mark of gratitude in fulfilment of a vow taken for recovery from some illness or safety from some danger. *Sā'ibah* was also the name given to the she-camel which had ten young ones, each of which was a she-camel.

Waṣīlah was the name given to a special he-goat which was one of the first born twins, the other of which was a she-goat. The practice about the first born young ones was that they used to sacrifice, in the name of their deities, the first born young one if it happened to be a he-goat. But if they happened to be twins they would not sacrifice the he-goat and would call it *Waṣīlah* and set it at liberty in the name of deities.

Ḥām was the name given to a he-camel as soon as his "grandson" became grown up and fit for riding: it was then set at liberty. The same name also was given to a he-camel which begot ten young ones and was set at liberty.

119. This is a warning against a common human weakness. Some people are always on the look-out to find out and criticise errors in others. Here such people have been admonished against this evil and asked to concentrate their

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ذَا قُرْبٰى ۙ وَ لَا نَكْتُمُ شَهَادَةَ اللّٰهِ اِنَّاۤ اِذًا لَّمِنَ الْاٰثِمِيْنَ ﴿106﴾ فَاِنْ عُثِرَ
عَلٰۤى اَنَّهُمَا اسْتَحَقَّاۤ اِثْمًا فَاٰخَرٰنِ يَقُوْمٰنِ مَقَامَهُمَا مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اسْتَحَقَّ
عَلَيْهِمُ الْاَوْلَيٰنِ فَيُقْسِمٰنِ بِاللّٰهِ لَشَهَادَتُنَاۤ اَحَقُّ مِنْ شَهَادَتِهِمَا وَ مَا
اعْتَدَيْنَاۤ ۖ اِنَّاۤ اِذًا لَّمِنَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿107﴾ ذٰلِكَ اَدْنٰۤى اَنْ يَّاْتُوْا بِالشَّهَادَةِ عَلٰى
وَجْهِهَاۤ اَوْ يَخَافُوْۤا اَنْ تُرَدَّ اَيْمَانٌۢ بَعْدَ اَيْمَانِهِمْ ؕ وَ اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَ اسْمَعُوْا ؕ
وَ اللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِى الْقَوْمَ الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿108﴾ يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُ اللّٰهُ الرُّسُلَ فَيَقُوْلُ
مَا ذَاۤ اُجِبْتُمْ ؕ قَالُوْا لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا ؕ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوْبِ ﴿109﴾ اِذْ قَالَ
اللّٰهُ يٰعِيْسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ اذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِىْ عَلَيْكَ وَ عَلٰى وَالِدَتِكَ ۘ اِذْ اَيَّدْتُّكَ
بِرُوْحِ الْقُدُسِ ؕ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِى الْمَهْدِ وَ كَهْلًا ۚ وَ اِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتٰبَ
وَ الْحِكْمَةَ وَ التَّوْرٰىةَ وَ الْاِنْجِيْلَ ۚ وَ اِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّيْنِ كَهَيْـَٔةِ الطَّيْرِ
بِاِذْنِىْ فَتَنْفُخُ فِيْهَا فَتَكُوْنُ طَيْرًا بِاِذْنِىْ وَ تُبْرِئُ الْاَكْمَهَ وَ الْاَبْرَصَ
بِاِذْنِىْ ۚ وَ اِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتٰى بِاِذْنِىْ ۚ وَ اِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِىْۤ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ عَنْكَ
اِذْ جِئْتَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْهُمْ اِنْ هٰذَاۤ اِلَّا سِحْرٌ
مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿110﴾ وَ اِذْ اَوْحَيْتُ اِلَى الْحَوَارِيّٖنَ اَنْ اٰمِنُوْا بِىْ وَ بِرَسُوْلِىْ ۚ قَالُوْۤا اٰمَنَّا
وَ اشْهَدْ بِاَنَّنَا مُسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿111﴾ اِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّوْنَ يٰعِيْسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ
يَسْتَطِيْعُ رَبُّكَ اَنْ يُّنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا مَآئِدَةً مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ ؕ قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ
اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿112﴾ قَالُوْا نُرِيْدُ اَنْ نَّاْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَ تَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوْبُنَا وَ نَعْلَمَ
اَنْ قَدْ صَدَقْتَنَا وَ نَكُوْنَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشّٰهِدِيْنَ ﴿113﴾ قَالَ عِيْسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ
اللّٰهُمَّ رَبَّنَاۤ اَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَآئِدَةً مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ تَكُوْنُ لَنَا عِيْدًا لِّاَوَّلِنَا

But if it is discovered that the two had been guilty of the same sin, then two other better qualified witnesses than the former, from among those who were deprived of their right, should come forward and testify upon oath, by Allah, "Our testimony is truer than their testimony, and we have not made any transgression in our testimony: we shall be among the unjust, if we do so." It is expected that in this way the people will give only true evidence: or, at least, they will fear lest their oaths should be contradicted by subsequent oaths. Fear Allah and listen: Allah does not show His Guidance to those who are disobedient. 107-108

On the Day,[122] when Allah will assemble all the Messengers, He will ask, "What was the response you received?"[123] They will answer, "We have no knowledge:[124] You alone have the full knowledge of all that is hidden." Just imagine the occasion, when Allah will say[125] "O Jesus, son of Mary, recall to mind My favour I bestowed upon you and upon your mother: I strengthened you with the Holy Spirit; you talked to the people even in the cradle as you talked when you were grown up; I taught you the Book and the Wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel: by My leave you made from clay the likeness of a bird, and breathed into it, and by My leave it became a living bird; by My leave you healed the born-blind and the lepers; by My leave you brought forth the dead.[126] Also remember that I protected you from the Israelites, when you came to them with clear signs, and the disbelievers among them said, 'These signs are nothing but obvious sorcery" and remember also that I inspired the Disciples to believe in Me and My Messenger; then they said, 'We have believed and bear witness that we are Muslims."[127] ——(In regard to the disciples),[128] this incident may also be kept in mind: They said, "O Jesus, son of Mary, can your Lord send down to us from heaven a tray of food?" Jesus said, "Fear Allah, if you are true Believers." They replied, "We only wish to eat of this tray so that our hearts may be re-assured and we may know it for certain that what you have said to us is true, and that we may bear witness to it." At this, Jesus, son of Mary, prayed, "O Allah, our Lord, send to us from heaven a tray of food that it may become a recurring festival to us, to the first of us and to the last of us, and that it may be a Sign from You. Provide for us and You are the best of providers." 119-114

وَاٰخِرِنَا وَاٰيَةً مِّنْكَ ۚ وَارْزُقْنَا وَاَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرّٰزِقِيْنَ ﴿١١٤﴾ قَالَ اللّٰهُ اِنِّيْ
مُنَزِّلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ فَمَنْ يَّكْفُرْ بَعْدُ مِنْكُمْ فَاِنِّيْٓ اُعَذِّبُهٗ عَذَابًا لَّآ اُعَذِّبُهٗٓ اَحَدًا
مِّنَ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿١١٥﴾ وَاِذْ قَالَ اللّٰهُ يٰعِيْسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ ءَاَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ
اتَّخِذُوْنِيْ وَاُمِّيَ اِلٰهَيْنِ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ قَالَ سُبْحٰنَكَ مَا يَكُوْنُ لِيْٓ اَنْ
اَقُوْلَ مَا لَيْسَ لِيْ ۗ بِحَقٍّ ؕ اِنْ كُنْتُ قُلْتُهٗ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهٗ ؕ تَعْلَمُ مَا فِيْ نَفْسِيْ
وَلَآ اَعْلَمُ مَا فِيْ نَفْسِكَ ؕ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوْبِ ﴿١١٦﴾ مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ اِلَّا مَآ
اَمَرْتَنِيْ بِهٖٓ اَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ رَبِّيْ وَرَبَّكُمْ ۚ وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيْدًا مَّا دُمْتُ
فِيْهِمْ ۚ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِيْ كُنْتَ اَنْتَ الرَّقِيْبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ؕ وَاَنْتَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
شَهِيْدٌ ﴿١١٧﴾ اِنْ تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَاِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ ۚ وَاِنْ تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَاِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْعَزِيْزُ
الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿١١٨﴾ قَالَ اللّٰهُ هٰذَا يَوْمُ يَنْفَعُ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ صِدْقُهُمْ ؕ لَهُمْ جَنّٰتٌ تَجْرِيْ
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَآ اَبَدًا ؕ رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوْا عَنْهُ ؕ
ذٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيْمُ ﴿١١٩﴾ لِلّٰهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَمَا فِيْهِنَّ ؕ وَهُوَ
عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿١٢٠﴾

Allah answered, "I am going to send it down to you,[129] but whoever among you shall disbelieve after that, I will surely give him such a chastisement wherewith I will not have chastised any other creature in the world."— (After reminding him of these favours), Allah will say, "O Jesus, son of Mary, did you ever say to the people, 'Make me and my mother deities besides Allah'?"[130] He will say, "Glory be to You! It did not behove me to say that which I had no right to say. Had I ever said such a thing, You would most surely have known it, for You know all that is in my mind, but I do not know what is in Your mind: indeed You have full knowledge of all the hidden things. I never told them anything other than what You bade me. I said, 'Worship Allah, Who is my Lord as well as your Lord.' I was a witness to their conduct as long as I remained among them but when You recalled me, You watched over them; for You keep watch over everything. Now, if You punish them, they are your own servants, and if You forgive them, You are All-powerful and All-Wise." Then Allah will declare, "This is the Day when the truthfulness of the truthful benefits them; there are such Gardens for them underneath which canals flow; they will dwell therein for ever. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him; this is the greatest success." 115-119

The Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and whatever is therein belongs to Allah and He has power over everything. 120

Contd. from p. 487]

attention on their own acts, deeds, morals and beliefs instead of probing into and criticising the conduct and beliefs of others. If a man himself is obedient to Allah and fulfils his obligations to Him and man, and treads the path of truth and righteousness, which also includes the establishment of virtue and the eradication of vice, then most surely the crookedness and deviation of any other can do him no harm.

This verse however, does not mean that a person should think only of his own salvation and leave alone the reform of others. Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr Ṣiddiq refuted this misconception in an address, saying, "O people, you recite this verse and put on it a wrong interpretation. I myself heard the Holy Prophet say, 'When the people become so indifferent that they see evil and do not try to eradicate it and see an unjust person doing an injustice and do not prevent him from it, Allah may punish all of them.' I swear by Allah that it is obligatory on you to enjoin virtue

and forbid evil; (if you neglect this) Allah will place you under the worst people who will inflict hardships on you. Then your good people will offer prayers but He will not accept these."

120. That is, pious, righteous and trustworthy Muslims.

121. This shows that the Muslims are permitted to make the non-Muslims their witnesses only in case the Muslim witnesses are not available.

122. The Day of Resurrection.

123. That is, "What was the response of the world to the invitation that you gave towards Islam?"

124. That is, "We know only of that outward response which was made to our invitation during our lifetime. As regards the real practical response, we have no correct knowledge of it for that is known to You alone."

125. At first this question will be put collectively to all the Messengers. Then each of the Messengers will stand as a witness individually. Here that question, which will be put to Jesus Christ (Allah's peace be upon him), has been specially mentioned because it fits into the context.

126. That is, "You brought them back to life after death."

127. That is, "It was a favour upon you that the Disciples believed in you, by Our Grace; otherwise you had no power by yourself to convert even a single person out of the disbelievers."

Incidentally, the use of the word Muslims for the Disciples is meant to show that their religion was Islam and not Christianity.

128. This incident has been inserted here as a parenthesis to show that even his Disciples, who had received his teachings from him directly, considered Jesus a man and servant of God. Therefore, they could never conceive to make their master a god or a partner of God or son of God. This also shows that Jesus also presented himself as a servant without having any authority of his own.

It may be asked, "What was the occasion of inserting this parenthesis here to interrupt the conversation that was being cited?" The answer is that the conversation that would take place on the Day of Resurrection has been quoted here for the benefit of the Christians so that they may learn the lesson and adopt the right way. It is, therefore, quite pertinent to insert the incident mentioned in the parenthesis to impress the same lesson.

129. The Qur'ān is silent as to whether the 'tray' was sent down or not and there is no other authentic source of information. Possibly it was sent down,

but it is equally possible that the Disciples themselves might have taken back their request after the warning in verse 115.

130. This refers to another error of the Christians. They had made Mary an object of worship along with Christ and the Holy Ghost, though there is not a word or hint in the Bible about this doctrine. During the first three centuries after Christ, the Christian world was totally unaware of this creed. Towards the end of the 3rd century, the words "Mother of God" were used for the first time by some theologians of Alexandria. Though the response which these words found in the popular heart was great, yet the Church was not at first inclined to accept the doctrine and declared that the worship of Mary was a wrong creed. Then at the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D., the words 'Mother of God' were officially used by the Church. As a result 'Mariolatry' began to spread by leaps and bounds both inside and outside the Church. So much so that by the time the Qur'ān was revealed, the exaltation of the 'Mother of God' had eclipsed the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Her statues were set up in Churches and she was worshipped, implored and invoked in prayers. In short, the greatest source of reliance of a Christian was that he should obtain the help and protection of the 'Mother of God.' Emperor Justinian in the preamble to one of his laws bespeaks her advocacy for the empire and his general, Narses, looks to her directions on the battlefield. Emperor Heraclius, a contemporary of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, bore her image on his banner and believed that because of its auspicious nature it will never be lowered. Though the Protestants after the Reformation did their best to fight against Mariolatry, yet the Roman Catholic Church still adheres to it passionately.



VI
AL-AN'ĀM
اَلْاَنْعَام

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

VI
AL-AN'ĀM

سورة الأنعام

INTRODUCTION

Name:

This Sūrah takes its name from vv. 136, 138 and 139 in which some superstitious beliefs of the idolatrous Arabs concerning the lawfulness of some cattle (*an'ām*) and the unlawfulness of some others have been refuted.

Period of Revelation.

According to a tradition of Ibn 'Abbās, the whole of the Sūrah was revealed at one sitting at Makkah. Asmā' bint Yazīd, a first cousin of Ḥaḍrat Mu'ādh-bin-Jabal, says, "During the revelation of this Sūrah, the Holy Prophet was riding on a she-camel and I was holding her nose-string. The she-camel began to feel the weight so heavily that it seemed as if her bones would break under it." We also learn from other traditions that the Holy Prophet dictated the whole of this Sūrah the same night that it was revealed.

Its subject-matter clearly shows that it must have been revealed during the last stage of the Holy Prophet's life at Makkah. The tradition of Asmā' bint Yazīd, also confirms the same. As she belonged to the *Ansār* and embraced Islam after the emigration of the Holy Prophet to Yathrīb, her visit to the Holy Prophet at Makkah must have taken place during the last year of his life there. For, before this, his relations with

the people of Yathrib were not so intimate that a woman might have come from there to visit him at Makkah.

Occasion of Revelation.

After determining the period of its revelation, it is easier to visualise the background of the Sūrah. Twelve years had passed since the Holy Prophet had been inviting the people to Islam. The antagonism and persecution by the Quraish had become most savage and brutal, and the majority of the Muslims had to leave their homes and emigrate to Ḥabash (Abyssinia) Above all, the two great supporters of the Holy Prophet, Abū Ṭālib and Ḥadrat Khadījah, were no more to help and give strength to him. Thus he was deprived of all the worldly support. But, in spite of this, he carried on his mission in the teeth of opposition. As a result of this, on the one hand, all the good people of Makkah and the surrounding clans gradually began to accept Islam; on the other, the community as a whole, was bent upon obduracy and rejection. Therefore, if anyone showed any inclination towards Islam, he was subjected to taunts and derision, physical violence and social boycott. It was in these dark circumstances that a ray of hope gleamed from Yathrib, where Islam began to spread freely by the efforts of some influential people of Aus and Khazraj, who had embraced Islam at Makkah. This was a humble beginning in the march of Islam towards success and none could foresee at that time the great potentialities that lay hidden in it. For, to a casual observer, it appeared as if Islam was merely a weak movement: it had no material backing except the meagre support of the Prophet's own family and of the few poor adherents of the Movement. Obviously, the latter could not give much help because they themselves had been cast out by their own people who had become their enemies and were persecuting them.

Topics.

These were the conditions, when this discourse was revealed. The main topics dealt with in this discourse may be divided under seven headings:

(1) Refutation of *shirk* and invitation to the creed of *Tauhīd*.

(2) Enunciation of the doctrine of "Life-after death" and refutation of the wrong notion that there was nothing beyond this worldly life.

(3) Refutation of the prevalent superstitions.

(4) Enunciation of the fundamental moral principles for the building up of the Islamic Society.

(5) Answers to the objections raised against the person of the Holy Prophet and his mission.

(6) Comfort and encouragement to the Holy Prophet and his followers who were in a state of anxiety and despondency because of the apparent failure of the mission.

(7) Admonition, warning and threats to the disbelievers and opponents to give up their apathy and haughtiness.

It must, however, be noted that the above topics have not been dealt with one by one under separate headings, but the discourse goes on as a continuous whole and these topics come under discussion over and over again in new and different ways.

Background of Makkī Sūrahs.

As this is the first long Makkī Sūrah in the order of the compilation of the Qur'ān, it will be useful to explain the historical background of the Makkī Sūrahs in general, so that the reader may easily understand the Makkī Sūrahs and our references to its different stages in connection with our commentary on them.

First of all, it should be noted that comparatively very little material is available in regard to the background of the revelation of the Makkī Sūrahs whereas the period of the revelation of almost all the Madanī Sūrahs is known or can be determined with a little effort. There are authentic traditions even in regard to the occasions of the revelation of the majority of the verses. On the other hand, we do not have such detailed information regarding the Makkī Sūrahs. There are only a few Sūrahs and verses which have authentic traditions concerning the time and occasion of their revelation. This is because the history of the Makkī period had not been compiled in such detail as that of the Madanī period. Therefore we have to depend on the internal evidence of these Sūrahs for determining the period of their revelation: for example, the topics they discuss, their subject-matter, their style and the direct or indirect references to the events and the occasions of their revelation. Thus it is obvious that with the help of such evidence, we cannot say

with precision that a particular Sūrah or verse was revealed on such and such an occasion. The most we can do is to compare the internal evidence of a Sūrah with the events of the life of the Holy Prophet at Makkah, and then come to a more or less correct conclusion as to what particular stage a certain Sūrah belongs.

If we keep the above things in view, the history of the mission of the Holy Prophet at Makkah can be divided into four stages:

The first stage began with his appointment as a Messenger and ended with the proclamation of Prophethood three years Later. During this period the Message was given secretly to some selected persons only, but the common people of Makkah were not aware of it.

The second stage lasted for about two years after the proclamation of his Prophethood. It began with opposition by individuals: then by and by, it took the shape of antagonism, ridicule, derision, accusation, abuse, and false propaganda: then gangs were formed to persecute those Muslims who were comparatively poor, weak and helpless.

The third stage lasted for about six years from the beginning of the persecution to the death of Abū Ṭālib and Ḥaḍrat Khadījah in the tenth year of Prophethood. During this period, the persecution of the Muslims became so savage and brutal that many of them were forced to migrate to Ḥabash. Social and economic boycott was applied against the Holy Prophet, members of his family, and the Muslims who continued to stay in Makkah and he was besieged in Shi'b Abi Ṭālib along with his followers and supporters.

The fourth stage lasted for about three years, from the tenth to the thirteenth year of Prophethood. This was a period of hard trials and grievous sufferings for the Holy Prophet and his followers. Life became unendurable at Makkah and there appeared to be no place of refuge even outside it. So much so that when he went to Ṭa'if, it offered no shelter or protection. Besides this, on the occasion of Ḥajj, he would appeal to each and every Arab clan to accept his invitation to Islam but met with blank refusal from every quarter. At the same time, the people of Makkah were holding counsels to get rid of him by killing, imprisoning or banishing him from their city. It was at that critical time that Allah

opened for Islam the hearts of the *Anṣār* of Yathrīb, where he migrated on their invitation.

Now that we have divided the life of the Holy Prophet at Makkah into four stages, it has become easier for us to tell, as far as possible, the particular stage in which a certain Makkī Sūrah was revealed. This is because the Sūrahs belonging to a particular stage can be distinguished from those of the other stages with the help of their subject-matter and style. Besides this, they also contain such references as throw light on the circumstances and events that form the background of their revelation. In the succeeding Makkī Sūrahs, we will determine, on the basis of the distinctive features of each stage, and point out in the introduction, the particular stage in which a certain Makkī Sūrah was revealed.

SUMMARY

Subject:

Islamic Creed.

This Sūrah mainly discusses the different aspecs of the major articles of the Islamic Creed: *Tauhid*, Life-after-death, Prophethood and their practical application to human life. Side by side with this, it refutes the erroneous beliefs of the opponents and answers their objections, warns and admonishes them and comforts the Holy Prophet and his followers, who were then suffering from persecution.

Of course, these themes have not been dealt with under separate heads but have been blended in an excellent manner.

Topics and their Interconnection

1-12 These verses are of introductory and admonitory nature. The disbelievers have been warned that if they do not accept the Islamic Creed and follow the 'Light' shown by the Revelation from the All Knowing and All-Powerful Allah, they would go to the same doom as the former disbelievers did. Their arguments for rejecting the Prophet and the Revelation sent down to him have been refuted and a warning has been given to them that they should not be deluded by the respite that is being granted to them.

13-24 These verses inculcate *Tauhid*, and refute *shirk* which is the greatest obstacle in the way of its acceptance.

25-32 In these verses, a graphic scene of the life in the Hereafter has been depicted in order to warn the disbelievers of the consequences of the rejection of the Articles of Faith.

33-73 Prophethood is the main theme which has been discussed from the point of view of the Holy Prophet, his Mission, the limitations of his powers, the attitude towards his followers and also from the point

of view of the disbelievers.

In continuation of the same theme, the story of Prophet Abraham has been related to bring home to the pagan Arabs that the Mission of Prophet Muhammad, which they were opposing, was the same as that of Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon them). This line of argument was adopted because they considered themselves to be his followers, especially the Quraish who were proud of being his descendants as well. 7490

Another proof of his Prophethood is the Book, which has been sent down to him by Allah, for its teachings show the right guidance in regard to creed and practice. 91-108

Divine restrictions have been contrasted with the superstitious restrictions of the pagan Arabs in order to show the striking differences between the two and thus prove the Qur'ān to be a Revealed Book. 109-154

The Jews, who were criticised in vv.144:147 along with the pagan Arabs, have been urged to compare the teachings of the Qur'ān with those of the Torah so that they might recognize their similarity and give up their lame excuses against it, and adopt its Guidance to escape the retribution on the Day of Resurrection. 155-160

This is the conclusion of the discourse: the Holy Prophet has been instructed in a beautiful and forceful manner to proclaim fearlessly the articles of the Islamic Creed and their implications. 161-165



اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِیْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضَ وَ جَعَلَ الظُّلُمٰتِ وَ النُّوْرَ ۟
ثُمَّ الَّذِیْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِرَبِّهِمْ یَعْدِلُوْنَ ۝ هُوَ الَّذِیْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ طِیْنٍ ثُمَّ
قَضٰۤى اَجَلًا ؕ وَ اَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى عِنْدَهٗ ثُمَّ اَنْتُمْ تَمْتَرُوْنَ ۝ وَ هُوَ اللّٰهُ فِیْ

VI
AL-AN'ĀM

الانعام

Verses: 165 *Revealed at Makkah*

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Praise is only for Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth 1-3
and ordained light and many kinds of darkness; inspite of this, those who have rejected the Message of their Lord have set up equal partners with Him.[1] It is He Who has created you from earth[2] and decreed a fixed term of life for you, and with Him there is another settled[3] term also — yet you have doubts thereof. He is the same One Allah in the heavens as well as on the earth: He knows all that you make known and all that you keep secret and is fully aware of the good or evil that you earn.

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1. It should be noted that the addressees were the *mushrik* Arabs, who acknowledged that the Creator of the earth and heavens and of the sun and the moon is Allah, Who brought about the day and night. None of them believed that

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السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ فِی الْاَرْضِ ؕ یَعْلَمُ سِرَّكُمْ وَ جَهْرَكُمْ وَ یَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُوْنَ ﴿۳﴾ وَ
مَا تَاْتِیْهِمْ مِّنْ اٰیَةٍ مِّنْ اٰیٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ اِلَّا كَانُوْا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِیْنَ ﴿۴﴾ فَقَدْ
كَذَّبُوْا بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ ؕ فَسَوْفَ یَاْتِیْهِمْ اَنْۢبٰٓؤُا مَا كَانُوْا بِهٖ یَسْتَهْزِءُوْنَ ﴿۵﴾
اَلَمْ یَرَوْا كَمْ اَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِّنْ قَرْنٍ مَّكَّنّٰهُمْ فِی الْاَرْضِ مَا لَمْ
نُمَكِّنْ لَّكُمْ وَ اَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَآءَ عَلَیْهِمْ مِّدْرَارًا ۪ وَّ جَعَلْنَا الْاَنْهٰرَ تَجْرِیْ
مِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ فَاَهْلَكْنٰهُمْ بِذُنُوْبِهِمْ وَ اَنْشَاْنَا مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا اٰخَرِیْنَ ﴿۶﴾
وَ لَوْ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَیْكَ كِتٰبًا فِیْ قِرْطَاسٍ فَلَمَسُوْهُ بِاَیْدِیْهِمْ لَقَالَ الَّذِیْنَ
كَفَرُوْۤا اِنْ هٰذَاۤ اِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِیْنٌ ﴿۷﴾ وَ قَالُوْا لَوْ لَاۤ اُنْزِلَ عَلَیْهِ مَلَكٌ ؕ وَ لَوْ
اَنْزَلْنَا مَلَكًا لَّقُضِیَ الْاَمْرُ ثُمَّ لَا یُنْظَرُوْنَ ﴿۸﴾ وَ لَوْ جَعَلْنٰهُ مَلَكًا لَّجَعَلْنٰهُ
رَجُلًا وَّ لَلَبَسْنَا عَلَیْهِمْ مَّا یَلْبِسُوْنَ ﴿۹﴾ وَ لَقَدِ اسْتُهْزِئَ بِرُسُلٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ
فَحَاقَ بِالَّذِیْنَ سَخِرُوْا مِنْهُمْ مَّا كَانُوْا بِهٖ یَسْتَهْزِءُوْنَ ﴿۱۰﴾ قُلْ سِیْرُوْا
فِی الْاَرْضِ ثُمَّ انْظُرُوْا كَیْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِیْنَ ﴿۱۱﴾ قُلْ لِّمَنْ مَّا فِی
السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ ؕ قُلْ لِّلّٰهِ ؕ كَتَبَ عَلٰی نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ ؕ لَیَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ اِلٰی
یَوْمِ الْقِیٰمَةِ لَا رَیْبَ فِیْهِ ؕ اَلَّذِیْنَ خَسِرُوْۤا اَنْفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا یُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿۱۲﴾
وَ لَهٗ مَا سَكَنَ فِی الَّیْلِ وَ النَّهَارِ ؕ وَ هُوَ السَّمِیْعُ الْعَلِیْمُ ﴿۱۳﴾ قُلْ اَغَیْرَ اللّٰهِ
اَتَّخِذُ وَلِیًّا فَاطِرِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ وَ هُوَ یُطْعِمُ وَ لَا یُطْعَمُ ؕ قُلْ اِنِّیْۤ
اُمِرْتُ اَنْ اَكُوْنَ اَوَّلَ مَنْ اَسْلَمَ ۫ وَ لَا تَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِیْنَ ﴿۱۴﴾ قُلْ اِنِّیْۤ
اَخَافُ اِنْ عَصَیْتُ رَبِّیْ عَذَابَ یَوْمٍ عَظِیْمٍ ﴿۱۵﴾ مَنْ یُّصْرَفْ عَنْهُ یَوْمَىٕذٍ
فَقَدْ رَحِمَهٗ ؕ وَ ذٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْمُبِیْنُ ﴿۱۶﴾ وَ اِنْ یَّمْسَسْكَ اللّٰهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ

Yet the reaction of the people has been that whenever a Sign from the Signs of their Lord has come to them, they have turned away from it: accordingly, they have rejected as false the Truth that has come to them now. Well, they will receive some news[4] about what they have been ridiculing so far. Do they not see that We destroyed before them many a people who were dominant in the world during their time? We had given them such power in the land as We have not given you. We sent down for them abundant rains from heavens and made canals flow beneath them. But (when they showed ingratitude), We destroyed them because of their sins and raised up other people in their place. 4-6

O Messenger, even if We had sent down to you a Book written on paper, and even if they had touched it with their own hands, the disbelievers would have said, "This is nothing but manifest sorcery." And they say, "Why has no angel been sent down to him?"[5] If We had sent down an angel, their fate would have been decided long before this and they would have been given no respite after this;[6] for if We had sent an angel, We would have sent him in human form and thus involved them in the same doubt in which they are involved now.[7] 7-9

O Muhammad, many Messengers before you have also been ridiculed, but in the long run those who mocked were overpowered by the very thing they had mocked. Say to them, "Just travel in the land and see the end of those who treated the Truth as false."[8] 10-11

Ask them, "To Whom belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth?" — Say, "To Allah,[9] Who has prescribed mercy and generosity for Himself: (that is why He does not catch hold of you immediately at your first disobedience). He will, however, certainly muster all of you on the Day of Resurrection. There is no doubt about this; yet those who have made themselves liable to ruin, do not believe in this." 12

All that lies in the darkness of the night and in the light of the day belongs to Allah, and He hears and knows everything. Say, "Should I take as my guardian any other than Allah? Should I forsake that Allah Who is the Creator of the earth and the heavens and Who nourishes all and does not stand in need of nourishment from anyone?"[10] Say, "I have been enjoined to be the first of those who surrender to Him, (and I have been urged) not to be of those who 13-16

commit *shirk*." Say, "I do fear the torment of a (dreadful) Day, if I should disobey my Lord." He, who will be delivered from the torment of that Day, will have received Allah's mercy, and this is a great success.

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these were the works of *Lāt* or *Hubal* or *'Uzza* or of any other god or goddess. Therefore Allah admonished them, saying (so to speak), "O foolish people, when you yourselves admit that the Creator of the heavens and earth and of the night and day, is Allah, why do you, then, make others your gods, and prostrate before them, make offerings to them, present your needs before them and invoke them for help?" (Refer to E.N.2 of Al-Fatihah and E.N. 163, Al-Baqarah).

It may be noted that *Zulumāt* (plural of *Zulmat*) has been used in contrast to *nūr* (light, singular form). It is because darkness is merely the absence of light and may be of many kinds.

2. Allah says that He has created man from "earth" because each and every particle of the human body comes from the earth and from nowhere else.

3. "The other settled term" is the "Day of Resurrection", when all human beings will be brought back to life and presented before Allah for rendering the account of their life on the earth.

4. The reference is to the "news" of the successes that were to follow the emigration of the Holy Prophet to Madīnah. At the time of this revelation, neither the disbelievers nor the Believers could ever imagine the nature of the "news" they were going to receive. So much so that even the Holy Prophet himself was unaware of the kind of successes the Muslims were going to achieve in the near future.

5. The ignorant objectors argued that if Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was really a Messenger from Allah, an angel ought to have come down from heaven to declare to the people: "This is the Messenger of Allah, so obey him; otherwise you shall be punished".

The ignorant objectors did not understand how the Creator of the heavens and earth could leave His Messenger in such a plight as to be maligned and stoned by his enemies. They argued that the Messenger of such a Supreme Sovereign ought to have come with a large retinue or at least an angel in attendance on him, to protect him from his enemies and to fill the people with awe and to convince them of his Prophethood and to carry out his orders in some supernatural ways.

6. The first answer to their objection is that in case Allah had sent down an angel, no respite would have been given them for reforming themselves and mending their ways. They have been given a chance because no angel has been sent to make the Reality so naked as to leave no alternative for them but to believe. It is obvious that this would have defeated the very purpose of their life in the world to undergo their test. That is why no angel has been sent. Man should undergo his test and discover the unseen Reality without actually seeing it, merely by the right use of his reasoning and thinking powers, and then bring under control his own self and its lusts in accordance with the dictates of that Reality. It is thus obvious that the "Unseen" must remain unseen for the sake of that test.

The worldly life, the period of that test, will remain so only as long as the "Unseen" remains unseen. No sooner will the "Unseen" become evident than that "Period" will automatically come to an end, and instead of test, it will be the time of the result of the test. Therefore Allah is not granting your demand for an angel to appear before you because Allah does not like to end the term of your test before the expiry of the period of the test. (Refer also to E.N. 228, Al-Baqarah).

7. The only other alternative was to send an angel in human form. Allah says that if He had sent an angel in human form, they would have felt the same difficulty in recognizing him as they were feeling in recognizing Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him). This, too, would have involved them in doubts. Therefore it was for their own good that Allah had not sent an angel in attendance on His Messenger.

8. That is, those, who ridicule the Message, should travel through the land and see the remains, and study the history of the former peoples. These will bear witness to the horrible end of those who behaved in the way they are behaving towards Muḥammad (Allah's peace be upon him).

9. It is a nice way of cornering the *mushrikīn*. At first Allah tells His Messenger to ask them, "Whose is all that is in the heavens and the earth?" The questioner put the question and waited for an answer. But they kept silent because their answer could neither be in the negative nor in the affirmative. They could not deny this because they themselves believed that 'all belongs to Allah.' But they could not affirm this because in that case, they themselves would have supplied the adversary with an argument against their own creed of *shirk*. After putting them in this critical position, Allah enjoined His Messenger to say, "All belongs to Allah."

10. This contains a subtle argument: all those, whom the *mushrikīn* have made their gods besides Allah, stand in need of nourishment from their devotees, not to speak of giving nourishment to them. No Pharaoh can set up his grandeur

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لَهٓ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَ اِنْ يَّمْسَسْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿١٧﴾ وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ
فَوْقَ عِبَادِهٖ ۚ وَ هُوَ الْحَكِيْمُ الْخَبِيْرُ ﴿١٨﴾ قُلْ اَىُّ شَىْءٍ اَكْبَرُ شَهَادَةً ۭ قُلِ
اللّٰهُ ۙ شَهِيْدٌۢ بَيْنِىْ وَ بَيْنَكُمْ ۣ وَ اُوْحِىَ اِلَىَّ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنُ لِاُنْذِرَكُمْ بِهٖ وَ
مَنْۢ بَلَغَ ۭ اَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَشْهَدُوْنَ اَنَّ مَعَ اللّٰهِ اٰلِهَةً اُخْرٰى ۭ قُلْ لَّآ اَشْهَدُ ۚ قُلْ
اِنَّمَا هُوَ اِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ وَّ اِنَّنِىْ بَرِىْٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿١٩﴾ اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ
يَعْرِفُوْنَهٗ كَمَا يَعْرِفُوْنَ اَبْنَآءَهُمْ ۘ اَلَّذِيْنَ خَسِرُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا
يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَ مَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا اَوْ كَذَّبَ بِاٰيٰتِهٖ ۭ
اِنَّهٗ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿٢١﴾ وَ يَوْمَ نَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيْعًا ثُمَّ نَقُوْلُ لِلَّذِيْنَ
اَشْرَكُوْٓا اَيْنَ شُرَكَآؤُكُمُ الَّذِيْنَ كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُوْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾ ثُمَّ لَمْ تَكُنْ فِتْنَتُهُمْ
اِلَّآ اَنْ قَالُوْا وَ اللّٰهِ رَبِّنَا مَا كُنَّا مُشْرِكِيْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾ اُنْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَذَبُوْا عَلٰٓى
اَنْفُسِهِمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَّا كَانُوْا يَفْتَرُوْنَ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَ مِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَّسْتَمِعُ اِلَيْكَ ۚ
وَ جَعَلْنَا عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ اَكِنَّةً اَنْ يَّفْقَهُوْهُ وَ فِىْٓ اٰذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا ۭ وَ اِنْ يَّرَوْا كُلَّ
اٰيَةٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُوْا بِهَا ۭ حَتّٰٓى اِذَا جَآءُوْكَ يُجَادِلُوْنَكَ يَقُوْلُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا
اِنْ هٰذَآ اِلَّآ اَسَاطِيْرُ الْاَوَّلِيْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَهُمْ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ وَ يَنْـَٔوْنَ عَنْهُ ۚ وَ
اِنْ يُّهْلِكُوْنَ اِلَّآ اَنْفُسَهُمْ وَ مَا يَشْعُرُوْنَ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَ لَوْ تَرٰٓى اِذْ وُقِفُوْا عَلَى النَّارِ
فَقَالُوْا يٰلَيْتَنَا نُرَدُّ وَ لَا نُكَذِّبَ بِاٰيٰتِ رَبِّنَا وَ نَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾
بَلْ بَدَا لَهُمْ مَّا كَانُوْا يُخْفُوْنَ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۭ وَ لَوْ رُدُّوْا لَعَادُوْا لِمَا نُهُوْا عَنْهُ
وَ اِنَّهُمْ لَكٰذِبُوْنَ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَ قَالُوْٓا اِنْ هِىَ اِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا وَ مَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوْثِيْنَ ﴿٢٩﴾
وَ لَوْ تَرٰٓى اِذْ وُقِفُوْا عَلٰى رَبِّهِمْ ۭ قَالَ اَلَيْسَ هٰذَا بِالْحَقِّ ۭ قَالُوْا بَلٰى وَ رَبِّنَا ۭ

If Allah afflicts you with an evil, there is none other than Him to relieve you from this, and if He bestows some good on you, (know that) He has power over everything. He has supreme authority over His servants and He is All-Wise, All-Aware. 17-18

Ask them, "Whose testimony is the most reliable?" Say, "Allah is witness[11] between me and you (that I am His Messenger), and this Qur'ān has been revealed to me so that I should thereby warn you and all whom it may reach. What, will you really testify that there are other deities besides Allah?"[12] Say, "As for me, I will never testify such a thing."[13] Say, "Indeed, He alone is the Deity and I feel disgusted with the *shirk* you practise." Those, to whom We have given the Book, recognize this with as much certainty as they recognize their own sons.[14] But those, who have made themselves liable to perdition, do not believe in this. And, who can be more unjust than the one who brings false allegations against Allah[15] or denies Allah's Signs?[16] Indeed, such unjust people can never attain to true success. 19-21

On the Day, when We muster them all together, We shall ask the *mushrikīn*, "Where are now your associates whom you had taken for your deities?" Then they shall not be able to play any other trick (than make this false statement): "We swear by You, our Lord, we were not at all *mushrikīn*." Behold, how they will invent a lie against themselves and how all the false gods, they had forged, will forsake them! 22-24

There are some among them, who (pretend to) listen to what you say, but they do not undestand it, as We have cast veils over their hearts; We have made them hard of hearing (so they are deaf[17] to what they hear). Even if they see any Sign, they will not believe in it; so much so that when they come and contend with you, those, who have already made up their minds not to believe (after hearing all), say, "This is nothing but the same old story."[18] They forbid other people to believe in this Truth, and themselves turn away from it. (They imagine that in this way they are doing you some harm), whereas they are preparing their own perdition, though they do not perceive it. Would that you could see their condition at the time, when they will be made to stand before Hell! They will say, "Would that we could somehow return to the earthly life again: then we would not deny the 25-30

Signs of our Lord, and would join the Believers." As a matter of fact, they will say this because the Reality which they had concealed before this, will have appeared manifest before them.[19] But the fact is that even if they were sent back to the earthly life, they would do all that they had been forbidden to do. They are liars (that is why they will give vent to such a false wish). Today they say, "There is no other life than this our worldly life, and we shall never be raised back to life after our death." Would that you could witness the scene, when they will be brought before their Lord: then their Lord will ask them, "Is this not the Reality?" They will say, "Yes, our Lord, this is the Reality." Then He will declare, "Well, taste the torment for denying this Reality."

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unless his subjects pay taxes and make offerings to him; no saint becomes worthy of worship, unless his worshippers build a grand mausoleum for him; no god becomes a god unless his devotees make his idol and set it up in a grand temple and decorate it with ornamentation. Thus, all the artificial gods stand in need of their servants. It is the Lord of the universe alone, Who does not stand in need of anyone's help but all others stand in need of Him, and it is His Godhead alone that does not stand in need of any prop from anyone whatsoever, but supports itself.

11. That is. "Allah is a witness that I have been appointed a Messenger by Him and whatever I say is from Him."

12. Mere guess-work or speculation does not suffice for testifying to anything: none can testify to a thing with certainty without the necessary knowledge about it. The question implies: "Do you really have the knowledge that there is any other Sovereign with authority than Allah, Who is worthy of service and worship?"

13. That is, "You may, if you so like, give false testimony without any knowledge, but, as for me, I cannot give such a testimony."

14. It means that those, who possess the knowledge of revealed Books, know it for certain that there is only One God, Who has no partner in His Godhead. Therefore they can discern the right creed about Allah from among many different kinds of other creeds and theories about Godhead, just as any person can identify his own child from among many thousands of other children.

15. "False allegation" is the claim that there are many other partners with Allah in His Godhead who have divine attributes and powers and are thus worthy of worship. It is also false to allege that Allah Himself has made such and such His

special courtiers and has enjoined (or at least approved) that Divine attributes should be ascribed to them and that they should be treated with reverence, like Allah.

16. "Allah's Signs" are all those signs that point to the fact that there is only One God in the universe and that all others are His servants. These signs are spread all over the universe. They are found in the person of man himself and in the character and the great achievements of the Prophets and in the revealed Books. That is why the one, who, in the presence of all these "Signs," ascribes Divine attributes to others and considers them worthy of Divine rights, is in fact guilty of gross iniquity. It is indeed a great injustice that one should ascribe such Divine attributes to others without any evidence, knowledge, observation and experience merely on the basis of guess-work or the traditions of the forefathers. As a result of this false creed, he does injustice to Truth, to Reality, to his own self and to everything and everyone he deals with in this universe.

17. Here Allah has ascribed to Himself the cause of the defects produced in their faculties of understanding, hearing and seeing, for everything that takes place in the world under the Natural Law does, in fact, take place by the command of Allah because He is the Author of that Law. Therefore the resultant effects of the working of that Law, in fact, take place by the will and order of Allah. The obdurate disbelievers do not understand, do not hear and do not see the Truth, even though they seem to listen to the Message of the Messenger, because their obduracy, their prejudice and their unwillingness have, according to the law of Nature, dulled their faculties. The law is that if one is bent upon obduracy and does not adopt the attitude of a righteous person, all the doors of his heart automatically get locked against every kind of truth that goes against his lusts. When this natural process is described in the human language, it will be said, "The doors of the heart of such and such a person are locked." But God, without Whose Command and Leave nothing whatsoever can happen, will describe the same like this, "We have locked the doors of the heart of such and such a person." This is because a human being will describe the thing as it seems to happen, whereas Allah states the true nature of the happening.

18. This is the excuse that the foolish people put forward for rejecting the Message. They say, "There is nothing new in the Message towards which the Messenger is inviting us. This is the same old Message that we have been hearing before." According to these foolish people, in order to be true, a Message must also be new because according to them that which is old cannot be true. Whereas the fact is that the Message has always been one and the same and will ever remain so. The Messengers of Allah, who had been coming from the earliest times for the

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قَالَ فَذُوْقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُوْنَ ﴿30﴾ قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِلِقَآءِ
اللّٰهِ ؕ حَتّٰۤى اِذَا جَآءَتْهُمُ السَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً قَالُوْا يٰحَسْرَتَنَا عَلٰى مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِيْهَا ۙ
وَهُمْ يَحْمِلُوْنَ اَوْزَارَهُمْ عَلٰى ظُهُوْرِهِمْ ؕ اَلَا سَآءَ مَا يَزِرُوْنَ ﴿31﴾ وَمَا الْحَيٰوةُ
الدُّنْيَاۤ اِلَّا لَعِبٌ وَّلَهْوٌ ؕ وَلَلدَّارُ الْاٰخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِيْنَ يَتَّقُوْنَ ؕ اَفَلَا
تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿32﴾ قَدْ نَعْلَمُ اِنَّهٗ لَيَحْزُنُكَ الَّذِيْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ فَاِنَّهُمْ لَا يُكَذِّبُوْنَكَ
وَلٰكِنَّ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ يَجْحَدُوْنَ ﴿33﴾ وَلَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ
فَصَبَرُوْا عَلٰى مَا كُذِّبُوْا وَاُوْذُوْا حَتّٰۤى اَتٰىهُمْ نَصْرُنَا ۚ وَلَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمٰتِ
اللّٰهِ ۚ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَكَ مِنْ نَّبَاِى الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ ﴿34﴾ وَاِنْ كَانَ كَبُرَ عَلَيْكَ اِعْرَاضُهُمْ
فَاِنِ اسْتَطَعْتَ اَنْ تَبْتَغِىَ نَفَقًا فِى الْاَرْضِ اَوْ سُلَّمًا فِى السَّمَآءِ فَتَاْتِيَهُمْ
بِاٰيَةٍ ؕ وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ لَجَمَعَهُمْ عَلَى الْهُدٰى فَلَا تَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْجٰهِلِيْنَ ﴿35﴾
اِنَّمَا يَسْتَجِيْبُ الَّذِيْنَ يَسْمَعُوْنَ ؕ وَالْمَوْتٰى يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللّٰهُ ثُمَّ اِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُوْنَ ﴿36﴾
وَقَالُوْا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ اٰيَةٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّهٖ ؕ قُلْ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ قَادِرٌ عَلٰۤى اَنْ
يُّنَزِّلَ اٰيَةً وَّلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿37﴾ وَمَا مِنْ دَآبَّةٍ فِى الْاَرْضِ وَ
لَا طٰٓئِرٍ يَّطِيْرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ اِلَّاۤ اُمَمٌ اَمْثَالُكُمْ ؕ مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِى الْكِتٰبِ مِنْ شَىْءٍ
ثُمَّ اِلٰى رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُوْنَ ﴿38﴾ وَالَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا صُمٌّ وَّبُكْمٌ فِى
الظُّلُمٰتِ ؕ مَنْ يَّشَاِ اللّٰهُ يُضْلِلْهُ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّشَاْ يَجْعَلْهُ عَلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴿39﴾
قُلْ اَرَءَيْتَكُمْ اِنْ اَتٰىكُمْ عَذَابُ اللّٰهِ اَوْ اَتَتْكُمُ السَّاعَةُ اَغَيْرَ اللّٰهِ تَدْعُوْنَ ۚ
اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿40﴾ بَلْ اِيَّاهُ تَدْعُوْنَ فَيَكْشِفُ مَا تَدْعُوْنَ اِلَيْهِ اِنْ
شَآءَ وَتَنْسَوْنَ مَا تُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿41﴾ وَلَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَاۤ اِلٰۤى اُمَمٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ فَاَخَذْنٰهُمْ

وقف لازم وقف مطلق عند البعض على يشعرون

Losers indeed are those who consider it a lie that they will ever have a meeting with Allah. When the Hour overtakes them unawares, they will exclaim, "Alas! how negligent we have been of this matter!" and they will be carrying the burdens of their sins on their backs: behold, how heavy is the burden they are carrying! This worldly life is but a sport and pastime.[20] In fact, the abode of the Hereafter is better for those who desire to be safe from harm. Will you not, then, use your commonsense? 31-32

O Muḥammad, We know that what they say, grieves you, but it is not you whom they charge with falsehood; these wicked people are, in fact, denying the Revelātions of Allah.[21] Many Messengers before you have also been treated as impostors, but they bore with fortitude the charge of imposture and persecution (by the disbelievers), till Our help came down to them. None has the power to change the Law of Allah,[22] and you have already received the news of what happened to the Messengers before you. However, if you find it hard to bear their aversion, then seek out, if you can, an opening into the earth, or set up a ladder to the sky so that you may bring them a Sign.[23] Had Allah willed, He would have gathered them all on guidance; so do not behave like the ignorant people.[24] Only those, who listen to it, accept the Message; as for the dead,[25] Allah will raise them from the graves only and they shall be brought back (to be produced in His Court). 33-36

These people ask, "Why has no Sign been sent down to this Prophet from his Lord?" Say, "Allah is able to send down a Sign, but most of these people do not understand the wisdom underlying it."[26] As regards Signs, just have a look at any of the beasts that move upon the earth and at any of the birds that fly in the air: they too are species like you. We have left out nothing in pre-determining the courses of their lives: then ultimately they are all gathered to their Lord. But those, who deny Our Signs, are deaf and dumb, dwellings in many sorts of darkness[27]; Allah lets go astray whom He wills and guides to the Right Way whom He pleases.[28] Ask them to consider deeply and answer, "When some great misfortune befalls you, or the last hour approaches you, do you invoke any other than Allah? Answer, if you be in the right." At that time tyou invoke Allah alone: then, if He pleases, He averts the affliction from you, and on such occasions, you 37-41

forget those whom you had set up as His partners.[29]

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guidance of mankind, have always been communicating the same Message; likewise, the Holy Prophet was also presenting the same old Message. Of course, only those, who being devoid of Divine Light, cannot see the aforesaid eternal reality, might invent something new and by forging some theories present them as truth, saying, "We have a new Message, which has never been given by anyone before us."

19. Their desire, that, if they could return to this world again, they would believe in the Message, will not be the outcome of any right thinking and reasoning or any real change of their hearts and minds, but will be the result of witnessing the Reality after which even the most obdurate disbeliever dare not deny it.

20. This does not mean that the life in this world is not real and earnest and has been created merely for sport and pastime without any serious purpose. What it means is that compared with the everlasting life in the Hereafter, the short transitory life in this world is like sport and pastime, which are diversions from serious work, to which one has to return after recreation. Moreover, this worldly life has been likened to sport and pastime, because here are many things of deceptive appearances that are liable to involve in misunderstanding those people, who lack common-sense and vision, and help them assume false positions so as to make life mere sport and pastime. For instance, the role of a ruler in this worldy life is, in fact, not any different from that of an actor who plays the role of a king on the stage, wears a crown and gives commands which are obeyed like those of a real king; whereas, in fact, he has no powers of a real king and is deposed, imprisoned and killed by the order of the director; likewise many other such dramas are being performed on the stage of this world day and night all around us. There is 'the court' of a 'saint' or a goddess, where the needs are being "fulfilled", whereas, in fact, that 'court' has no such power. Then there is another actor who performs the feats of divining the unseen and the future; whereas, in fact, none possesses such knowledge. Still another poses to be the nourisher of others, when in fact, he himself stands in need of obtaining provisions from others. There is still another who poses as if he has the power of bestowing honour and benefit or of inflicting disgrace and loss and behaves arrogantly as if he were the absolute master of all around him. In fact, he himself is utterly powerless and helpless, for a little turn of fortune can dethrone him from the high pedestal of greatness to the lowest depths of disgrace. So much so that he might even be at the feet of those very people, over whom he was ruling as a despot. All these dramas that are being played on the stage of life are abruptly brought to an end by death.

Then everyone will cross over to the other world and see for himself everything in its true colour; then all the misunderstandings of the life of this world shall be removed and everyone will be shown the real worth of what he had earned for the Life-after-death.

21. The fact is that all the people of his tribe regarded the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (upon whom be peace) truthful and honest up to the time he had not begun to recite the Revelations of Allah before them. They falsified him only when he began to deliver to them the Message of Allah. Even then, there was none who dared charge Muḥammad, the Man, with falsehood; nay, even his bitterest enemies never accused him of having ever told a lie concerning any worldly matter. It was Muḥammad, the Prophet, whom they charged with falsehood. So much so that even Abū Jahl, who was the bitterest of all his enemies never accused him of falsehood. According to a tradition related by Ḥaḍrat 'Alī, Abū Jahl himself declared during a conversation with the Holy Prophet, "We do not call you a liar; but regard as false what you are presenting." On the occasion of the Battle of Badr, Akhnas bin Sharīq asked Abū Jahl in private, "There is no third person here besides us two. Tell me the truth whether you regard Muḥammad as a truthful man or as a liar." He answered, "By God, Muḥammad is a truthful person and has never told a lie in his life, but if Banī Qusayy, who have already the privilege of being the bearers of the national flag and the providers of water to the pilgrims and the keepers of the keys of the Ka`bah, should also be acknowledged as the recipients of Prophethood, what would then be left for the rest of the Quraish?" For this very reason Allah is comforting His Prophet, saying, "It is not you whom they are rejecting as an impostor but it is Our Message which they are rejecting; when We are forbearing everything and giving them respite after respite, why should you show any kind of anxiety?"

22. The "Law" referred to here is the Law of Allah concerning the conflict between the right and the wrong. According to this Law, it is essential that the righteous should be tried for a long period to stand their test in order to prove their fortitude, their righteousness, their spirit of sacrifice and their fidelity, their firm belief in their Faith and their complete trust in Allah. For this they must pass through afflictions and hardships in order to develop those high moral qualities which can be learnt only by going through this hard and tough course, for with these weapons alone, they are required to win the battle against falsehood. When, according to this Law, they prove their competence, then will Allah's help come at the right moment to support them and this help cannot be brought about before its time by anyone.

23. Whenever the Holy Prophet felt that his people did not accept the Message inspite of his continuous preaching, he cherished the desire that Allah

might send such a clear Sign that they should have no alternative left but to accept his Message. In this verse Allah has admonished His Messenger against cherishing any such desire, so as to say, "Do not show impatience at their obduracy, but go on performing your mission persistently in the way and order We are laying down for it. If this mission had to be performed by means of miracles, could We not Ourselves have done so? But We know that this method is not suitable for bringing about that intellectual and moral revolution and for the establishment of that righteous society for which you have been appointed a Messenger. If, however, you cannot endure the heart-burning caused by their indifference and rejection and if you imagine that a tangible Sign, that might appeal to them, is required to break this inert state of their minds, then you should yourself try to bring about such a Sign: you may, if you can, go deep down into the bowels of the earth or ascend up to the heavens for this purpose, but you should not expect from Us that We would fulfil this desire of yours, for there is no room for it in Our scheme."

24. This is to impress that it is not the purpose of Allah that all human beings should be forced to accept the Guidance somehow or other. Had it been so, He would have created them in such a way that they would have been righteous by birth like angels. Then there would have been no need of sending the Prophets and the Books and of making the Believers enter into a conflict with the disbelievers for the gradual establishment of the Way of Allah. But Allah does not desire this. On the contrary, He intends that the Truth should be presented to the people in a rational way so that those, who are convinced of it, may adopt it without any coercion, and then mould their characters in accordance with it to prove their moral superiority over the disbelievers. In this way they would go on attracting the best among the people towards it till they succeeded in establishing the Way by virtue of their high ideals, best principles of life, pure characters and strong arguments and with resolute struggle with the disbelievers. Then Allah assures them of the guidance and help they need and deserve at any stage. But if one wishes that, instead of this natural process, Allah should adopt some supernatural method and eradicate false ideas from the minds of the people and bring in pure ones instead and establish the righteous civilization in place of the evil ones, he should know that Allah will not do this for this will be against the wisdom of the scheme of His creation of Man. He has created Man as a responsible being granted him powers to exploit the things of the world and given him the freedom of action both good and evil and granted him a definite term for the preparation of the test and fixed the time for the declaration of the result of the test — to punish or reward him according to his efforts.

25. "Those, who listen to it..." are the people whose conscience is alive, who try to judge rationally between right and wrong, and who do not deliberately and obdurately lock the doors of their hearts.

"Those who are dead..." are the people who blindly follow a way and are not ready to leave it and follow any other way even though that may manifestly be the Right Way.

26. "Sign" means a tangible miracle. Allah says that the reason why he is not showing a Sign is not that He is unable to do so but for another reason whose wisdom they do not understand. (See E.N. 6).

27. That is, "If you are really serious in your demand of seeing a Sign in order to judge whether the Message of this Prophet is true or false, you should see and ponder over the innumerable Signs that are found in abundance all around you. For instance, if you consider animal life, you will see that the structure of the bodies of each species of birds and beasts suits its functions immensely well; the qualities and characteristics that have been ingrained in its nature help to fulfil all its needs; the provision of its nourishment has been arranged in a wonderful way; and the course of its life has been so predetermined that it cannot transgress its limits in any way whatever. Allah also sees that each and every animal, nay, even the smallest insect, is being looked after, protected and guided, wherever it be, for the performance of the functions pre-destined for it. In short, you will find that its structure suits it well; it has been given inherent powers that help provide its needs: excellent provisions have been made for its food. The process of its birth, procreation and death has been going on according to a regulated fixed scheme. If you give a careful consideration to this Sign alone, you will realize that the teachings of this Prophet about the Oneness of God and His attributes and the way of life based on these to which he invites you are absolutely true. Yet you neither try to see with open eyes these Signs nor listen to the Message this Prophet is conveying to you. As a result, you have been involved in ignorance and, therefore, desire to see some wonderful miracle for mere pastime."

28. This is how Allah lets them go astray: (1) He holds back the opportunity for observing His Signs from the one who chooses to remain in ignorance; (2) He keeps hidden the pointers to the Reality from the one who is a victim of prejudices, even though he should see His Signs, and lets him remain involved in misunderstandings and move farther and farther away from the Reality. On the contrary, He guides the seeker after truth to the Right Way by affording him the opportunity to make use of his knowledge for the purpose of discovering the Reality, and showing him the signs guiding towards it.

We daily notice instances of these types. There are millions of people before whose eyes countless Signs are spread in their own persons and in the universe, but they see them like animals and do not learn any lessons from them. Then there are the physicists, chemists, zoologists, botanists, biologists, geologists,

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بِالْبَاْسَآءِ وَالضَّرَّآءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَضَرَّعُوْنَ ﴿42﴾ فَلَوْلَآ اِذْ جَآءَهُمْ بَاْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوْا
وَلٰكِنْ قَسَتْ قُلُوْبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿43﴾ فَلَمَّا
نَسُوْا مَا ذُكِّرُوْا بِهٖ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ اَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ؕ حَتّٰٓى اِذَا فَرِحُوْا
بِمَآ اُوْتُوْٓا اَخَذْنٰهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَاِذَا هُمْ مُّبْلِسُوْنَ ﴿44﴾ فَقُطِعَ دَابِرُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِيْنَ
ظَلَمُوْا ؕ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿45﴾ قُلْ اَرَءَيْتُمْ اِنْ اَخَذَ اللّٰهُ سَمْعَكُمْ
وَاَبْصَارَكُمْ وَخَتَمَ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِكُمْ مَّنْ اِلٰهٌ غَيْرُ اللّٰهِ يَاْتِيْكُمْ بِهٖ ؕ اُنْظُرْ
كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْاٰيٰتِ ثُمَّ هُمْ يَصْدِفُوْنَ ﴿46﴾ قُلْ اَرَءَيْتَكُمْ اِنْ اَتٰىكُمْ
عَذَابُ اللّٰهِ بَغْتَةً اَوْ جَهْرَةً هَلْ يُهْلَكُ اِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿47﴾ وَمَا
نُرْسِلُ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ اِلَّا مُبَشِّرِيْنَ وَمُنْذِرِيْنَ ۚ فَمَنْ اٰمَنَ وَاَصْلَحَ فَلَا
خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿48﴾ وَالَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا يَمَسُّهُمُ
الْعَذَابُ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَفْسُقُوْنَ ﴿49﴾ قُلْ لَّآ اَقُوْلُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِيْ خَزَآئِنُ اللّٰهِ
وَلَآ اَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ وَلَآ اَقُوْلُ لَكُمْ اِنِّيْ مَلَكٌ ۚ اِنْ اَتَّبِعُ اِلَّا مَا يُوْحٰٓى اِلَيَّ ؕ
قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْاَعْمٰى وَالْبَصِيْرُ ؕ اَفَلَا تَتَفَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿50﴾ وَاَنْذِرْ بِهِ الَّذِيْنَ
يَخَافُوْنَ اَنْ يُّحْشَرُوْٓا اِلٰى رَبِّهِمْ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِهٖ وَلِيٌّ وَّلَا شَفِيْعٌ
لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿51﴾ وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدٰوةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ
يُرِيْدُوْنَ وَجْهَهٗ ؕ مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ وَّمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ
عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ فَتَطْرُدَهُمْ فَتَكُوْنَ مِنَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿52﴾ وَكَذٰلِكَ فَتَنَّا
بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لِّيَقُوْلُوْٓا اَهٰٓؤُلَآءِ مَنَّ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْۢ بَيْنِنَا ؕ اَلَيْسَ اللّٰهُ
بِاَعْلَمَ بِالشّٰكِرِيْنَ ﴿53﴾ وَاِذَا جَآءَكَ الَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاٰيٰتِنَا فَقُلْ سَلٰمٌ

We sent Messengers before you to many peoples and afflicted them with calamities and misfortunes so that they might bow down before Us with humility. Why did they not then humble themselves when Our scourge overtook them? Instead of this, their hearts were hardened all the more and Satan made, what they were doing, seem fair to them. After this when they forgot the Admonition that was given them, We opened the gates of every kind of prosperity for them; so much so that they were deeply absorbed in enjoying what was given to them. Then We seized them all of a sudden, and they were in a state of utter despair. Thus the transgressors were totally uprooted, and Allah, the Lord of the universe, be praised (that He uprooted them). 42-45

O Muhammad, ask them, "Have you ever considered this: If Allah were to take away your hearing and your sight and set a seal upon your hearts,[30] is there a deity other than Allah to restore them to you?" Behold! how We present Our Signs before them over and over again, and how they turn away from them in disdain. Say, "Have you also ever considered this: If the scourge of Allah comes upon you suddenly or openly, shall any but the transgressors be destroyed? For We send Our Messengers only to give good news to the righteous people and to warn the evil-doers: then those, who accept their Message and reform their own conduct, will have no cause for fear and sorrow and those who treat Our Revelātions as false, shall have to suffer punishment in consequence of their evil deeds. 46-49

Tell them, O Muhammad, "I do not claim that I possess the treasures of Allah nor that I know the "unseen", nor do I claim that I am an angel. I only follow the Revelātion that is sent down to me."[31] Then ask them, "Can the blind man and the seeing man be alike[32]? Do you not consider this thing?" 50

And, O Muhammad, admonish with this (knowledge based on Revelation) those, who fear that one Day they shall be brought before their Lord in such a state that they will find none other than Allah (with competent powers) as protector or intercessor: it may be that (by this admonition) they adopt the God-fearing attitude.[33] And do not drive away those who invoke their Lord morning and evening and are engaged in seeking His favour.[34] You are not in any way accountable for them, nor are they in any way accountable for you: so, if you should drive them away, you shall be counted among the unjust[35] As 51-53

a matter of fact, in this way We have made some of them a means for testing the others,[36] so that, seeing them, they should say, "Are these the people from among us upon whom Allah has showered His blessings?" — Yes: does not Allah know His grateful servants better than they?

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astronomers, physiologist, anatomists, historians, archaeologists, social scientists, etc., who observe such Signs as may enlighten the minds and the hearts with Faith, but they seem to see no "Sign" to lead them to the Reality, just because they begin their study with prejudiced minds, merely for the sake of material gains. Not only this, but every Sign leads them to atheism, disbelief, materialism and nature-worship. In contrast to them, there are those, who observe the wonders of the universe and the phenomena of Nature with open eyes and open hearts, and find the Signs of God all round them: SO much so that they can see His Sign in each and every green leaf.

29. In answer to the demand of the disbelievers for a Sign, they were told that there was not one Sign, but innumerable Signs scattered all around them and their attention has been drawn in v. 38 to study the mystery of the life of any bird or beast and they would find Sign of God. Now in v. 40-42, they have been directed to another Sign that they can find in their own selves. When some affliction befalls a man or death confronts him with all its dreads, then he sees no refuge in any other than Allah. On such occasions even the most confirmed polytheists forget their gods and invoke Allah's help. Likewise the most obdurate atheists, in their utter helplessness, involuntary pray to Allah for rescue, this Sign--man's own state of mind —is being presented here as a pointer to the Reality, for this is a clear proof of the existence of One God, and of the urge of God-worship that has been embedded deep in the heart of every human being. Though it might have been kept suppressed by negligence and ignorance, sometimes it comes to the surface under the stimulus of some misfortune.

'Ikrimah, son of Abū Jahl, who was an arch enemy of Islam, was led towards Islam by witnessing such a Sign. When the Holy Prophet conquered Makkah, 'Ikrimah fled to Jaddah and sailed for Abyssinia. During the voyage, there came a furious storm which threatened to sink the boat. At first the passengers began to invoke their gods and goddesses for help. But when the storm became so violent that they feared that the boat was going to sink, they all cried out, "This is not the time to call any open except Allah, because He alone can save us." This opened the eyes of 'Ikrimah and the locked doors of his heart: "If there is none here except Allah to help us, how can there be any to help us in any other

place? This is what Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) has been teaching us for the last twenty years any we have been fighting it out with him". That as the most decisive moment in the life of 'Ikrimah. He made a solemn pledge with Allah to this effect: "If I escape from this storm, I will directly go to Prophet Muhammad Allah's peace be upon him) to become a follower of his." Allah rescued him from that storm and he fulfilled his pledge. He not only became a Muslim, but spent the rest of his life in the service of Islam by performing Jihād.

30. "... and set a seal upon your hearts" means"" ...deprive you of the powers of thinking and understanding."

31. This verse removes the silly notions about Prophethood and answers the absured objections raised against the claim of Prophethood by Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). The foolish people have always had the silly notion that a Prophet of Allah must be supernatural and capable of performing wonderful miracles. For instance, they expected that a whole mountain should turn into a mass of gold at his bidding: that the earth should throw out treasures by his orders: that he should be able to tell the people all about their past and future: that he should be able to locate a lost thing and foretell whether a sick person will get well or die and whether a pregnant woman will give birth to a male or a female. They also believed that such a person should be above the common human limitations. They could not conceive anyone to be a prophet, if he suffered from hunger or thirst and needed sleep, or, if he had wife and children and went to the bazar to buy and sell the necessities of life, or, if he was sometimes forced to borrow money or was involved in poverty and indigence.

When Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) put forward the claim that he was a Messenger of Allah, his contemporaries wanted to test his claim with the touch-stone of such silly notions. They would ask him questions about the unseen things and demand supernatural miracles from him. They would also raise the objection that he was merely a common man, who needed food and drank water like them: who had wife and children and who moved about in the bazars. In answer to these things, Allah told His Prophet to inform them that he never claimed to be supernatural; his only claim was that he was following the Revelations he received from Allah and that he should be judged by that standard only.

32. The question is meant to bring home to them this fact: "I have seen with my own eyes and experienced directly the realities I am presenting to you, and I have gained their accurate knowledge through Revelation; therefore my

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عَلَيْكُمْ كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلٰى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ ۙ اَنَّهٗ مَنْ عَمِلَ مِنْكُمْ سُوْٓءًا
بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِهٖ وَاَصْلَحَ فَاَنَّهٗ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾ وَكَذٰلِكَ
نُفَصِّلُ الْاٰيٰتِ وَلِتَسْتَبِيْنَ سَبِيْلُ الْمُجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿٥٥﴾ قُلْ اِنِّيْ نُهِيْتُ اَنْ
اَعْبُدَ الَّذِيْنَ تَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ قُلْ لَّآ اَتَّبِعُ اَهْوَآءَكُمْ ۙ قَدْ
ضَلَلْتُ اِذًا وَّمَآ اَنَا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِيْنَ ﴿٥٦﴾ قُلْ اِنِّيْ عَلٰى بَيِّنَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّيْ وَ
كَذَّبْتُمْ بِهٖ ؕ مَا عِنْدِيْ مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوْنَ بِهٖ ؕ اِنِ الْحُكْمُ اِلَّا لِلّٰهِ ؕ يَقُصُّ
الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْفٰصِلِيْنَ ﴿٥٧﴾ قُلْ لَّوْ اَنَّ عِنْدِيْ مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوْنَ بِهٖ
لَقُضِيَ الْاَمْرُ بَيْنِيْ وَبَيْنَكُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ بِالظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٥٨﴾ وَعِنْدَهٗ مَفَاتِحُ
الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَآ اِلَّا هُوَ ؕ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ ؕ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ
وَّرَقَةٍ اِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِيْ ظُلُمٰتِ الْاَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَّلَا يَابِسٍ
اِلَّا فِيْ كِتٰبٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٥٩﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِيْ يَتَوَفّٰىكُمْ بِالَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُمْ
بِالنَّهَارِ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيْهِ لِيُقْضٰٓى اَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ۚ ثُمَّ اِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ
ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٦٠﴾ وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهٖ وَيُرْسِلُ
عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً ؕ حَتّٰٓى اِذَا جَآءَ اَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ
لَا يُفَرِّطُوْنَ ﴿٦١﴾ ثُمَّ رُدُّوْٓا اِلَى اللّٰهِ مَوْلٰىهُمُ الْحَقِّ ؕ اَلَا لَهُ الْحُكْمُ ۫ وَهُوَ
اَسْرَعُ الْحٰسِبِيْنَ ﴿٦٢﴾ قُلْ مَنْ يُّنَجِّيْكُمْ مِّنْ ظُلُمٰتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ تَدْعُوْنَهٗ
تَضَرُّعًا وَّخُفْيَةً ۚ لَئِنْ اَنْجٰىنَا مِنْ هٰذِهٖ لَنَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الشّٰكِرِيْنَ ﴿٦٣﴾ قُلِ
اللّٰهُ يُنَجِّيْكُمْ مِّنْهَا وَمِنْ كُلِّ كَرْبٍ ثُمَّ اَنْتُمْ تُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿٦٤﴾ قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ
عَلٰٓى اَنْ يَّبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِّنْ فَوْقِكُمْ اَوْ مِنْ تَحْتِ اَرْجُلِكُمْ اَوْ

When those, who have believed in Our Revelātions, come to you, say to them, "Peace be upon you: your Lord has prescribed for Himself mercy and compassion. (It is His compassion that) He forgives and treats with leniency anyone who commits an evil through ignorance and then repents and mends his ways."[37] In this way, We make Our Signs clear and plain so as to expose the way of the guilty ones.[38] 54-55

O Muhammad, say, "I have been forbidden to worship those, whom you invoke beside Allah." Say, "I will not follow your wishes for if I did that I should have gone astray, and would not be of the right guided." Say, "I take my stand on a clear proof from my Lord, and you have rejected it. Now, that which you demand to be hastened is not in my power,[39] for Allah alone has the sole authority of passing judgement: He declares the Truth and He is the best of arbiters". Say, "Had I the power to hasten that which you are demanding, the dispute between you and me would have been settled long before this, but Allah knows best how to deal with evil-doers. He alone has the keys of the "unseen", of which none has the knowledge but He. He knows all that is in the land and in the sea; there is not a leaf that falls from a tree but He knows about it; there is not a grain in the darkest bowels of the earth of which He is not aware; everything fresh and dry has been recorded in an open Book. It is He Who recalls your souls at night and knows what you do during the day; then next day He returns you to your usual work to complete the fixed term of your life. At long last, you shall all return to Him and He will let you know what you had been doing. He reigns supreme over His servants and appoints those, who keep watch over you[40] till the time the death of anyone of you approaches; then the angels sent by Him take away his soul and do not show the least negligence in the performance of their duty. Then all are brought back to Allah, their real Master. Beware of it that the sole authority of passing judgement rests with Him alone and He is the swiftest at reckoning." 56-62

O Muhammad, ask them, "Who rescues you from perils in the darkness of the land and sea? Who is He Whom you implore humbly and invoke secretly (at the time of affliction)? To whom do you make this promise: 'We will be grateful if you rescue us from this affliction'." — Say, "Allah delivers you from that and every other affliction; yet you associate other partners with Him."[41] 63-64

يَلْبِسَكُمْ شِيَعًا وَّ يُذِيْقَ بَعْضَكُمْ بَاْسَ بَعْضٍ ؕ اُنْظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْاٰيٰتِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَفْقَهُوْنَ ﴿65﴾ وَ كَذَّبَ بِهٖ قَوْمُكَ وَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ ؕ قُلْ لَّسْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ
بِوَكِيْلٍ ﴿66﴾ لِكُلِّ نَبَاٍ مُّسْتَقَرٌّ ۫ وَّ سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿67﴾ وَ اِذَا رَاَيْتَ الَّذِيْنَ
يَخُوْضُوْنَ فِيْۤ اٰيٰتِنَا فَاَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ حَتّٰى يَخُوْضُوْا فِيْ حَدِيْثٍ غَيْرِهٖ ؕ
وَ اِمَّا يُنْسِيَنَّكَ الشَّيْطٰنُ فَلَا تَقْعُدْ بَعْدَ الذِّكْرٰى مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿68﴾
وَ مَا عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ يَتَّقُوْنَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ وَّ لٰكِنْ ذِكْرٰى لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿69﴾ وَ ذَرِ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّخَذُوْا دِيْنَهُمْ لَعِبًا وَّ لَهْوًا وَّ غَرَّتْهُمُ الْحَيٰوةُ
الدُّنْيَا وَ ذَكِّرْ بِهٖۤ اَنْ تُبْسَلَ نَفْسٌۢ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ ۚ لَيْسَ لَهَا مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ
وَلِيٌّ وَّ لَا شَفِيْعٌ ۚ وَ اِنْ تَعْدِلْ كُلَّ عَدْلٍ لَّا يُؤْخَذْ مِنْهَا ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ
اُبْسِلُوْا بِمَا كَسَبُوْا ۚ لَهُمْ شَرَابٌ مِّنْ حَمِيْمٍ وَّ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌۢ بِمَا كَانُوْا
يَكْفُرُوْنَ ﴿70﴾ قُلْ اَنَدْعُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُنَا وَ لَا يَضُرُّنَا وَ نُرَدُّ
عَلٰۤى اَعْقَابِنَا بَعْدَ اِذْ هَدٰىنَا اللّٰهُ كَالَّذِى اسْتَهْوَتْهُ الشَّيٰطِيْنُ فِى الْاَرْضِ
حَيْرَانَ ۖ لَهٗۤ اَصْحٰبٌ يَّدْعُوْنَهٗۤ اِلَى الْهُدَى ائْتِنَا ؕ قُلْ اِنَّ هُدَى
اللّٰهِ هُوَ الْهُدٰى ؕ وَ اُمِرْنَا لِنُسْلِمَ لِرَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿71﴾ وَ اَنْ اَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ
وَ اتَّقُوْهُ ؕ وَ هُوَ الَّذِيْۤ اِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُوْنَ ﴿72﴾ وَ هُوَ الَّذِىْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ
الْاَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ ؕ وَ يَوْمَ يَقُوْلُ كُنْ فَيَكُوْنُ ۘ قَوْلُهُ الْحَقُّ ؕ وَ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ
يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِى الصُّوْرِ ؕ عٰلِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَ الشَّهَادَةِ ؕ وَ هُوَ الْحَكِيْمُ الْخَبِيْرُ ﴿73﴾
وَ اِذْ قَالَ اِبْرٰهِيْمُ لِاَبِيْهِ اٰزَرَ اَتَتَّخِذُ اَصْنَامًا اٰلِهَةً ۚ اِنِّيْۤ اَرٰىكَ وَ
قَوْمَكَ فِيْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿74﴾ وَ كَذٰلِكَ نُرِيْۤ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ مَلَكُوْتَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ

الانعام ٨ ع ١٣

Say, "He has the power to bring a scourge on you from above you or from beneath your feet or to split you into discordant factions to make you taste the violence of one another." Behold! how We present Our Signs over and over again in different ways before them so that they should understand the Reality.[42] Your people are rejecting it (the Qur'ān), although it is the Truth. Say, "I have not been made a supervisor over you.[43] Every event takes its prescribed time to appear; and, by and by, you yourselves shall see the consequences." 65-67

And, O Muḥammad, when you see that people are finding fault with Our Revelations, withdraw from them till they get engaged in some other talk; and, if ever Satan causes you to forget this,[44] quit the company of such unjust people when you realize your mistake. Though the pious people are not in any way accountable for them, yet it is their duty to admonish them; perhaps they may refrain from their evil ways.[45] And leave alone those who have taken their faith as a sport and pastime and have been deluded by the life of this world; nevertheless, go on admonishing them by reciting the Qur'ān to them lest any person should be seized because of his own deeds, and that too at the time, when there would be no protector, no helper and no intercessor to rescue him from Allah, and when no conceivable amount of ransom would be accepted from him; this is because such people shall be seized in consequence of what they themselves had earned; they shall get boiling water to drink and a painful torment to suffer for their rejection of the Truth. 68-70

O Muḥammad, ask them, "Should we invoke, instead of Allah, those, who can neither benefit us nor harm us? And should we turn upon our heels after Allah has shown us the Guidance? Should we put ourselves in the sad plight of the man, whom the satans have misled to wander over the desert in a bewildered state of mind, while his companions are calling aloud, 'Come to us: here is the right way'?" Say, "In fact, the right guidance is the Guidance of Allah and He has enjoined us to surrender to the Lord of the universe and establish the *Ṣalāt* and refrain from His disobedience; you shall all be gathered unto Him. It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in all truth,[46] and there shall be Resurrection the day He says, "Be." His word is the very truth and on the Day, when the Trumpet[47] is blown, His shall be the sole Sovereignty.[48] He has full knowledge of the visible and the 71-73

invisible[49] and He is All-Wise, All-Knowing."

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evidence is that of an eye witness. On the contrary, you are blind with regard to those realities: all your notions concerning them are based on guess-work and speculation or on the blind following of others. Therefore the difference between you and me is the same as of the man who is able to see and the one who is blind. That is what gives me superiority over you and not that I possess the treasures of God or have the knowledge of the unseen or that I am free from the common human limitations."

33. That is, "You should pay special attention only to those who believe that One Day they shall have to go before Allah to render an account of their deeds and who do not cherish any such false hopes that somebody's intercession and help will save them. It is because this "Admonition" can produce good effect only on such people and not on those who are so absorbed in the enjoyment of the pleasures of this world that they never think of their death or of going before Allah. Likewise, this "Admonition" will fall flat on those who are making merry in this world, deluding themselves into believing that no harm will come to them in the Hereafter because of their 'spiritual' relation with such and such a saint or because such and such a holy person will intercede with Allah in their behalf or because such a one has already made atonement for them. Obviously, no admonition can be beneficial to such people."

34. In this passage Allah has answered one of the objections that the big chiefs of the Quraish used to raise in regard to the followers of the Holy Prophet. They would say that none but the lowest stratum of society, consisting of slaves, menials and the like, had accepted Islam: they would taunt him of having such companions as Bilāl, 'Ammār, Suhaib, Khabbāb, etc., and ask in a jeering way, "Are these the only (honourable) people from amongst us, upon whom Allah has showered His blessings?" They did not rest content with making fun of their poor condition, but also passed stinging remarks about their past shortcomings, saying. "Just have a look at the past history of such and such people, who are today forming the "pious" group of the believers." Allah has advised His Prophet not to be disheartened by their unkind remarks.

35. That is, "If they had done something wrong in the past, they themselves shall be accountable for it and not you, for everyone shall get the reward of the good or evil one has done. Therefore, no good deed of yours will be put to their credit, nor will you be burdened with any evil deed of theirs. They come to you merely as seekers after truth and it will be injustice to look down upon them and drive them away."

36. That is, "By bestowing the blessing of Islam at the outset on the poor and indigent and those who held a low position in society, We have involved the upper rich and proud class in trial."

37. Allah has told his Messenger to console those of His followers who had committed heinous sins during the days of "ignorance" by inspiring them with the assurance that He forgives and treats leniently those who repent and mend their ways and, therefore, the taunts of the enemies of Islam need not worry them about what they had done in the past.

38. In order to understand the significance of v. 55, we should keep in view v. 37 in which the disbelievers asked, "Why has no Sign been sent down to this Prophet from his Lord?" In the subsequent passage (vv. 38-54) several manifest Signs have been cited to show that there is no lack of Signs but the disbelievers do not want to see them. Then in v. 55 such people have been warned, as if to say, "In this way We make Our Signs clear, plain and manifest so that those, who persist in their disbelief inspite of those Signs, should prove themselves to be guilty ones. For they choose the way of deviation deliberately, not because there is a lack of Signs to show the Right Way but because they do not want to see the Signs."

39. This alludes to the demand of the opponents for the scourge of Allah with which they were being threatened. They said, "Why does a scourge not come down upon us, when we are openly denying and defying you? If you have been really sent by Allah, then anyone, who denied and insulted you, would have been swallowed by the earth or stricken dead by lightning. How is it that the Messenger of Allah and his followers are undergoing untold afflictions and sufferings, while their tormentors are enjoying their lives merrily?"

40. Angels who keep strict watch over each and everything a man does or thinks of and maintain a complete record of all this.

41. That is, "You yourselves are a witness that Allah alone is All-Powerful: He alone has the sole authority and your prosperity and adversity wholly lie in His power and He alone is the maker of your destinies. That is why you turn to Him in your affliction, when you find that no other means of rescue has been left for you. In the face of this clear Sign, you have set up, without any reason or rhyme, others as partners in His Godhead. You live on His provisions but treat others as your providers: you get help from Him in your need, but set up others as your helpers and protectors: He rescues you from your distress, yet you regard others (besides Him) as your rescuers: it is He Whom you humbly invoke in your affliction, yet you take your offerings to others when he removes it. In short, you

witness the proofs of His Godhead, day and night, yet you serve and bow down before others."

42. It is a warning to those who had become very bold in their enmity with the Truth because no scourge from Allah was in sight. They are being warned that the scourge of Allah does not take long to come. A gust of wind can destroy them all at once. A sudden shake of an earthquake can sink their habitations under ground. A spark can set on fire the magazines of enmity and involve clans, nations and countries in endless blood feuds. Therefore, "If no scourge is coming on you, this should not make you so bold and neglectful as to go on treading blindly the way you are following without discerning whether it is right or wrong. Instead you should take advantage of the respite that is being given and of the Signs that are being presented to you and recognize the Reality and follow the Right Way."

43. That is, "It is no part of my duty to make you see what you would not see and to make you understand what you would not understand; nor am I responsible for bringing down a scourge on you, if you would not see or understand it. The only duty that has been assigned to me is to make plain to you the distinction between Truth and falsehood. Now that I have done my duty and you have rejected the Truth, the evil consequences of which I have been warning you will appear in due course."

44. That is, "If you ever forget this instruction and keep sitting in the company of such people."

45. Here very important practical instructions have been given to the pious people. Their first and foremost duty is to save themselves from any disobedience of Allah; they should not worry unnecessarily about the disobedient people, for they are not responsible for their disobedience. They should not, therefore, impose it upon themselves as an obligation that they have to convince them anyhow by argument and to refute their absurd objections. Their only duty is to present the Truth before them. Then, if they do not accept it, the pious people should not waste their time and energy by entering into useless polemical disputes, discussions and argumentations with the disbelievers. Instead, they should spend their time and energy in educating and training and reforming those who are sincere seekers after the Truth.

46. It occurs at several places in the Qur'ān that Allah has created the heavens and the earth "in all truth." It has very comprehensive meanings:

(1) It means that the earth and the heavens have not been created merely for fun. It is not the creation of the fancy of some god, or the toy of a child to be played with for amusement and broken after satiety. In fact, this world is a very serious affair and its creation has great wisdom and a

grand purpose behind it. It must, therefore, come to an end at the appointed time and then be resurrected so that the Creator may take account of all that has been done in it and ultimately build the Next World on the results of that reckoning.

That this world has been created for a purpose has also been mentioned at other places in the Qur'an in different ways:

(*a*) "Lord, You have not created all this in vain....." (Āl-'Imran, III: 91).

(*b*) "We have not created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them for mere fun." (Al-Anbiyā', XXI: 16).

(*c*) "Do you think that We have created you without any purpose and that you will never be brought back to Us?" (Āl-Mu'minūn, XXIII: 115).

(2) The whole universe has been built on the solid foundations of the Truth. Everything in it is based on just, wise and right laws and there is no room for injustice and folly and falsehood to take root and bear fruit in it. One should not, however, be misled by the partial and temporary successes of falsehood. At times Allah may allow the worshippers of falsehood opportunity to try their worst for the success of falsehood and injustice and wrong ways in order to show that all their efforts shall ultimately fail and every worshipper of falsehood will see at the Last Reckoning that all the efforts made for the success of this unholy cause had gone utterly waste.

(3) Allah has created the universe in truth and is ruling over it by His own personal right. He wields authority here because of His personal right as its Creator; one should not, therefore, be misled by seeing others holding authority over the affairs of the world. In fact, no one has, nor can have, any right to rule here, for no one has any right whatever over anything in the universe.

47. It is beyond our comprehension to understand the real nature of the blowing of the Trumpet. What we learn from the Qur'ān is that on the Day of Resurrection when the first Trumpet shall be blown by the Command of Allah, everyone and everything shall perish. Then after this (Allah alone knows how long after this) the second Trumpet shall be blown; then everyone from the beginning of the creation to its end, shall be brought back to life and mustered in the Plain of Resurrection. In short, on the first blowing of the Trumpet, the present system of the universe shall be destroyed and on its second blowing the new system, different in form and with different laws, shall be created.

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الْاَرْضِ وَلِيَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْمُوْقِنِيْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾ فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ الَّيْلُ رَاٰ كَوْكَبًا ۚ
قَالَ هٰذَا رَبِّيْ ۚ فَلَمَّآ اَفَلَ قَالَ لَآ اُحِبُّ الْاٰفِلِيْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَلَمَّا رَاَ الْقَمَرَ
بَازِغًا قَالَ هٰذَا رَبِّيْ ۚ فَلَمَّآ اَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِنْ لَّمْ يَهْدِنِيْ رَبِّيْ لَاَكُوْنَنَّ
مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّآلِّيْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾ فَلَمَّا رَاَ الشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ هٰذَا رَبِّيْ هٰذَآ
اَكْبَرُ ۚ فَلَمَّآ اَفَلَتْ قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ اِنِّيْ بَرِيْٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿٧٨﴾ اِنِّيْ وَجَّهْتُ
وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِيْ فَطَرَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ حَنِيْفًا وَّمَآ اَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ﴿٧٩﴾
وَحَآجَّهٗ قَوْمُهٗ ۚ قَالَ اَتُحَآجُّوْٓنِّيْ فِي اللّٰهِ وَقَدْ هَدٰىنِ ۚ وَلَآ اَخَافُ مَا
تُشْرِكُوْنَ بِهٖٓ اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّشَآءَ رَبِّيْ شَيْئًا ۚ وَسِعَ رَبِّيْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ۚ اَفَلَا
تَتَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَكَيْفَ اَخَافُ مَآ اَشْرَكْتُمْ وَلَا تَخَافُوْنَ اَنَّكُمْ اَشْرَكْتُمْ
بِاللّٰهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهٖ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطٰنًا ۚ فَاَيُّ الْفَرِيْقَيْنِ اَحَقُّ بِالْاَمْنِ ۚ
اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٨١﴾ اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوْٓا اِيْمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ اُولٰٓئِكَ
لَهُمُ الْاَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُّهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿٨٢﴾ وَتِلْكَ حُجَّتُنَآ اٰتَيْنٰهَآ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ عَلٰى قَوْمِهٖ ۚ
نَرْفَعُ دَرَجٰتٍ مَّنْ نَّشَآءُ ۚ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيْمٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهٗٓ اِسْحٰقَ وَ
يَعْقُوْبَ ۚ كُلًّا هَدَيْنَا ۚ وَنُوْحًا هَدَيْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِهٖ دَاوٗدَ وَ
سُلَيْمٰنَ وَاَيُّوْبَ وَيُوْسُفَ وَمُوْسٰى وَهٰرُوْنَ ۚ وَكَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿٨٤﴾
وَزَكَرِيَّا وَيَحْيٰى وَعِيْسٰى وَاِلْيَاسَ ۚ كُلٌّ مِّنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿٨٥﴾ وَاِسْمٰعِيْلَ وَ
الْيَسَعَ وَيُوْنُسَ وَلُوْطًا ۚ وَكُلًّا فَضَّلْنَا عَلَى الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَمِنْ اٰبَآئِهِمْ وَ
ذُرِّيّٰتِهِمْ وَاِخْوَانِهِمْ ۚ وَاجْتَبَيْنٰهُمْ وَهَدَيْنٰهُمْ اِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴿٨٧﴾ ذٰلِكَ
هُدَى اللّٰهِ يَهْدِيْ بِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهٖ ۚ وَلَوْ اَشْرَكُوْا لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُمْ

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And remember the incident when Abraham said to his father, Azar, "Do you take idols for deities?[50] I see that you and your people are in manifest deviation." And We showed[51] to Abraham the phenomena of the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth in the manner (that follows) so that he may become one of the firm believers.[52] Accordingly when the night outspread over him, he saw a star and said, "This is my Lord." But when it set, he declared, "I cannot love those that set." Afterwards when he saw the moon shining, he said, "This is my Lord." But when it also set, he cried, "If my Lord had not guided me, I, too would have been of those who had gone astray." Then, when he saw the sun shining brightly, he said, "This is my Lord. This is the largest of all." But when this also set, he exclaimed. "O my people, I have nothing to do with those whom you set up as partners with God.[53] As regards me, I have turned my face in exclusive loyalty and worship towards that Being Who has created the earth and the heavens and I am not at all of those who associate partners with Allah." And when his people began to argue with him, he said to them, "Do you argue with me in regard to Allah, whereas He has shown Guidance to me? And I do not fear those whom you have taken for gods: except that it be my Lord's will, for if my Lord wills anything it must happen. The knowledge of my Lord embraces everything. Will you not, then, remember this and come to your senses?[54] And there is no reason why I should fear those whom you have made partners with Allah, when you are not afraid of setting up those things as partners in Godhead for which He has sent no authority to you. Then tell me, if you have any knowledge: which of the two parties merits peace and freedom from fear? As a matter of fact, they alone, who have believed and not polluted their Faith with *shirk*,[55] have peace and are rightly guided." 74-82

This was Our argument which We bestowed upon Abraham against his people. We raise whom We will to exalted ranks; indeed your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing. 83

Then We bestowed upon Abraham descendants like Isaac and Jacob, and showed each of them the Right Way, (the same Right Way that) We had shown to Noah before them; and (We bestowed Guidance upon) David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses and Aaron from among his descendants. Thus, We reward the righteous people 84-87

for their good deeds. And (from among his descendants, We showed Guidance) to Zachariah, John, Jesus, and Elias, each of whom was an upright man. And (We showed the Right Way) to Ishmael, Elisha, Jonah and Lot (who were his offspring). And We exalted everyone of them over all the people of the world and showed favours to many of their forefathers and their descendants and their brethren and chose them for Our service and guided them aright.

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48. It does not mean that today Sovereignty is not His. What it means is this: "On that Day the curtain, that is covering the Reality today, will be lifted and it will become apparent that all those who seemed to wield authority or were supposed to wield it, had absolutely no authority, and that Sovereignty wholly belongs to Allah alone, Who is the Creator of the universe."

49. *Ghaib* is all that is hidden from the naked eye and cannot be seen and *Shahādat* is all that is visible to it.

50. This event of the life of the Prophet Abraham has been related here in support of and as a testimony to this argument: "Just as the Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and his followers have rejected *shirk* today under the Guidance of Allah and, turning away from artificial gods, have surrendered only to the One Owner of the universe, likewise the Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) did that before him. And just as the ignorant people are disputing with the Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), so the people of Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) had a dispute with him before this and that the followers of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) are today giving the same answer to their people that was given by the Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) to his people. Besides this, Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) is following the same Way that was followed by the Prophet Noah, and Abraham and all other Prophets from among Abraham's descendants (Allah's peace be upon them): therefore, those people, who are denying him, should know that they are deviating from the Way of the Prophets and are following wrong ways."

In this connection, it should also be noted that the mention of the creed of the Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) was very significant, for almost all the people of Arabia accepted him as their guide and leader. Especially the Quraish were very proud of being his descendants and keepers of the Ka'bah that was built by him. Therefore, the reference to his creed of *Tauhīd* and his refutation of *shirk* and his dispute with his people were very meaningful. This exposed the hollowness of the claim of their relationship with the Prophet Abraham (Allah's

peace be upon him) and deprived them of the satisfaction they had with the creed of *shirk*. This meant to show that the Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) and his followers were in the position of Prophet Abraham and their opponents were in that of the ignorant people who had a dispute with him. The argument was so subtle that it took, so to speak, the wind out of their sails and put them in such an awkward position that they did not know what to answer. This showed beyond all doubt that they were following a way opposed to that of Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) whom they held in great reverence and regarded as their ancestor and Prophet. Thus they were placed in the awkward position of his opponents.

51. That is, "Just as the phenomena of Nature are daily before your eyes and the Signs of God are being shown to you, so were these before Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him). But you, like blind men, do not see anything inspite of looking at them. The same stars, the samemoon and the same sun rise and set before your eyes, but they leave you as far away from the Reality at the time they set as you were at the time they rose. But when Abraham saw with his mind's eyes these very phenomena of Nature, he reflected upon them and came to know of the Reality.

52. In order to undestand the true nature of the dispute between the Prophet Abraham and his people mentioned in this passage and others in the Qur'ān, one should keep in view the religious and social conditions of his time. Now that Ur, the brith place of the Prophet Abraham, has been unearthed by modern archaeologists, it has helped reveal the real conditions prevailing in that land during that age. Sir Leonard Woolley has published the results of this research in this regard in his book, "*Abraham*", London, 1935. A resume of the same, (which has been translated into English from the *Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān*, is given below:

It has been estimated that round about the year 2100 B.C. which is now generally regarded by scholars as the period of Prophet Abraham, the population of Ur was nearly 2,50,000; it might even have been 5,00,000. It was a flourishing industrial and business centre. On the one side, it attracted trade goods from as far off places as Pamir and Nilgiri, and on the other, it had trade relations with Anatolia. The State, whose capital it was, extended a little less to the north and a little more to the west of modern 'Iraq. The people were mostly craftsmen and merchants by profession. The inscriptions of the age that thave been deciphered from the archaeological remains show that they had a materialist outlook on life; their main object of life was to amass wealth and make merry. They practised usury and were wholly absorbed in business. They regarded one another with suspicion and resorted to litigation on minor grounds. Their prayers to their gods

generally consisted of supplications for long life, prosperity and flourishing business. The population was divided into three classes:

(1) The *Amelu* : This was the highest class which consisted of the priests, state officials and military officers, etc.

(2) The *Mushkenu* : These were the merchants, craftsmen, and farmers.

(3) The *Ardu* : The slaves.

The Amelu class enjoyed special distinctions and privileges: they had greater rights both in the criminal and in the civil law than those of other people and their life and property were held sacred and precious.

Such was the city and the society in which the Prophet Abraham opened his eyes. According to the Talmud, he was a member of the Amelu class, and his father was the chief official of the state (Please see also Al-Baqarah: E.N. 290).

The tablets excavated at Ur mention the names of about 5,000 gods. Each city had its own god and also a special deity, who was regarded as the chief god or the city god and was entitled to greater reverence than the others. The city god of Ur was "Nannār" (the moon god) and scholars of the later ages have also called this city "Qamrinah" after that god. The other big city was "Larsah" which afterwards became the seat of government instead of Ur; its chief god was "Shamāsh" (the sun god). Under these chief gods there were many minor gods also, most of whom had been adopted from among the stars and planets and a few from among the earthly objects. People thought that their prayers for less important things were granted by these minor gods. The symbols of all these heavenly and earthly gods and goddesses had been formed in the shape of idols and all rites of worship were performed before them.

The idol of "Nannār" had been kept in a grand shrine built on the highest peak at Ur and near it the sanctuary of his wife "Ningil" had been built. The shrine of "Nannār" was just like a royal palace where every night a different female worshipper would go and become his bride. Thus there lived a large number of women in the shrine who had been dedicated to the god and their position was no better than religious prostitutes. The woman who would sacrifice her virginity in the name of the "god" was regarded very respectable. The common belief was that a women must surrender herself at least once in her lifetime to another man "in the way of god" in order to attain salvation. It is obvious that the people to benefit most from this religious prostitution were the male priests themselves.

"Nannār" was not merely a god; he was the biggest landlord of the country, the biggest merchant, the biggest craftsman and the chief executive of the

country's political life, for a very large number of gardens, houses and fields had been dedicated to his shrine. Besides the income from these sources, farmers, landlords and merchants also brought their offerings of corn, milk, gold, cloth, etc., to the shrine. Naturally there was a big staff to look after these offerings.

Many factories were run and business on a large scale was done on behalf of the Temple. The highest court of justice had been established in the shrine and the priests acted as judges and their judgements were regarded as from "God". The royal dynasty also derived its sovereignty from "Nannār", who was the real sovereign. The king ruled over the country on his behalf and was, therefore, himself raised to the rank of a deity and worshipped like the other gods.

The dynasty which was ruling over Ur in the time of the Prophet Abraham had been founded by Ur-Nammu who in 2300 B.C. had established a vast empire, which extended to Susa in the east and to Lebanon in the west. It was from him that the dynasty received the title of Nammu which became Namrūd in Arabic. After the emigration of the Prophet Abraham this dynasty and this nation were visited by continuous disasters. Their downfall was hastened by the destruction of Ur and the capture of Namrūd along with the idol of Nannār by the people of Elam. Then the Elamis established their rule at Larsah which dominated over the land of Ur also. The last blow was dealt by Babylon, which had grown powerful under an Arab dynasty and brought both Larsah and Ur under its control. As a result of this downfall, the people of Ur lost their faith in Nannār who had failed to protect them from humiliation, shame and ruin.

Nothing can be said with certainty about the response the people of this land made to the teachings of the Prophet Abraham after his emigration, but the law promulgated in 1910 B.C. by Hamurabi (Amraphel of Gen. xiv), king of Babylon, bears evidence that it had been influenced directly or indirectly by the Guidance of Prophethood. A pillar inscribed with this complete Code was discovered by a French archaeologist in 1902 A.D. and its English version was published in 1903 A.D. by C. H. W. John under the title, "The Oldest Code of Law." Most of the principles and details of this Law and the Law of the Prophet Moses, are, in general, alike.

If the results of the archaeological research, which has been carried out so far, are correct, one thing that clearly stands out is that *shirk* was not merely a religious belief and basis of polytheistic rituals with the people of Abraham but it was indeed the very basis of their economic, cultural, political and social system of life. In contrast to this, the Message of the Prophet Abraham not only clearly struck at the root of idol-worship, but also hit hard upon the sovereignty and worship of the royal dynasty and the social, economic and political status of the priests and nobles and the collective life of the whole country. Therefore, the

acceptance of his invitation had far-reaching implications. It called for a complete metamorphosis of the prevailing social pattern and demanded its re-construction on the basis of *Tauhīd*. That is why, as soon as the Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) began to deliver the Message, the common people and the nobles, the priest class and Nimrod, all stood up together to suppress his voice which gave rise to the bitter dispute, mentioned in the Qur'ān.

53. In vv. 76 - 78, the way of thinking which led the Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) to the Reality before his appointment as a Messenger of Allah has been stated. It teaches that if a person uses his brain and eyes rightly, he can reach the Reality, even if he is born and bred, like Prophet Abraham, in surroundings surcharged with *shirk* in which one might have had no chance of learning anything about the Oneness of God. The only condition is that one makes the right sort of observation of the phenomena of Nature and reflects upon them carefully and exercises one's reasoning to reach the truth by a connected, logical train of thought. It appears from the preceding verse that the Prophet Abraham, from the beginning of his conscious life, was surrounded by the people, who worshiped the stars, the moon and the sun. It was, therefore, natural that the starting point of his search for the truth should be the question: Can any of these objects really be the Lord and Sustainer? That is why his thinking centered round this question and when he discovered that all the gods of his people were bound tightly by an un-alterable law and were revolving in accordance with it, he came to the inevitable conclusion that none of these gods possessed, in the least, any quality that might entitle it to be the Lord. The Lord and Sustainer is only that One, Who has created them and bound them to His own obedience.

The wording in which the event has been couched, has generally given rise to an objection: "When the night outspread over him, he saw a star and said.... I am not one of those who set up partners with God." The question arises in the mind of the common reader: Did the night not outspread over Prophet Abraham every day of his life ever since he was a child and did he not see the stars, the moon and the sun rise and set before this particular occasion? Though he saw them every night, it is obvious that he began to deliberate like this only when he had attained his maturity. Why has then the event been described in such a way ("..... When the night outspread over him) as to give rise to the doubt as if he had never seen the stars and the moon and the sun ever before this? As such an assumption cannot hold good in ordinary circumstances, some people have had to invent an extraordinary story to remove this seeming anachronism. They say that the Prophet Abraham was born and brought up in a cave, where it was arranged that he should not see the stars, the moon and the sun before he attained his maturity. The matter, however, is so simple that it does not need the invention of a fantastic story to explain it. It can be easily understood by a well-known incident in

the life of Newton. One day when he saw an apple fall down from the tree to the ground, his mind suddenly turned to the problem: Why do things fall down to the ground? At last his deliberation led him to formulate and prove the law of gravity. Here, too, the question might arise: Had not Newton ever seen anything falling to the ground before this incident? It is obvious that he must have ssen many things fall to the ground many times before this. How is it then, that the fall of that particular apple on that particular day stirred up that particular mental activity which the daily fall of hundreds of things to the ground had not roused before this? The simple answer is that the minds are not always excited in the same way by the same kind of observations. Many a time, it so happens that one sees a thing over and over again but that does not stir up one's mind to any mental activity; then there comes a moment when the sight of that very thing diverts the mental activity towards a particular poblem. Or, if one's mind is engaged in the solution of a problem and one suddenly catches sight of a particular thing which had always been before one's eyes, it excites the mind to a mental activity that helps solve the problem. The same thing happened in the case of the Prophet Abraham. Nights came and passed away, the stars, the moon and the sun rose and set for years, but on one particular night the observation of one particulr star excited that mental activity which led him to the central Reality of the One-ness of God. It may be that ever since he attained maturity, he might have been thinking over the problem of the worship of the stars, the moon and the sun, because this was the religion of his people and on this was based the whole system of the life of that community. Then one night the observation of the star suddenly excited the mental activity that helped him solve the problem. It is also possible that the observation of the star was the starting point of that mental activity.

In this connection, there is another possible doubt that must also be removed. Was the Prophet Abraham guilty of *shirk* (even though temporarily), when seeing the star and the moon and the sun severally, he said, "This is my Lord." A little thinking will convince one that he was not at all guilty of *shirk* for in his search for Reality, a seeker-after-truth has, inevitably, to pass through several stages of deliberations about *shirk*. Therefore, what determines his creed is not the temporary deliberation but the direction of one's research and the ultimate destination where he stops. These intervening stages of deliberation have to be made by every seeker-after-truth in his search for Reality. These are made for the sake of research and should not be taken as the final decision. The deliberation about any form of *shirk* is in a questioning manner and is not its practice. When a seeker-after-truth stops to deliberate about anything and says, "It is so," it is not his final judgement. What he means to say is, "Is it so?" That is why he proceeds further in his research as soon as he gets a negative answer at any of these stages.

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مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٨٨﴾ اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ۚ فَاِنْ
يَّكْفُرْ بِهَا هٰٓؤُلَآءِ فَقَدْ وَكَّلْنَا بِهَا قَوْمًا لَّيْسُوْا بِهَا بِكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٨٩﴾ اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ
هَدَى اللّٰهُ فَبِهُدٰىهُمُ اقْتَدِهْ ۗ قُلْ لَّآ اَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ اَجْرًا ۗ اِنْ هُوَ اِلَّا
ذِكْرٰى لِلْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٩٠﴾ وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهٖٓ اِذْ قَالُوْا مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى
بَشَرٍ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ ۗ قُلْ مَنْ اَنْزَلَ الْكِتٰبَ الَّذِيْ جَآءَ بِهٖ مُوْسٰى نُوْرًا وَّهُدًى
لِّلنَّاسِ تَجْعَلُوْنَهٗ قَرَاطِيْسَ تُبْدُوْنَهَا وَتُخْفُوْنَ كَثِيْرًا ۚ وَعُلِّمْتُمْ مَّا لَمْ
تَعْلَمُوْٓا اَنْتُمْ وَلَآ اٰبَآؤُكُمْ ۗ قُلِ اللّٰهُ ۙ ثُمَّ ذَرْهُمْ فِيْ خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُوْنَ ﴿٩١﴾
وَهٰذَا كِتٰبٌ اَنْزَلْنٰهُ مُبٰرَكٌ مُّصَدِّقُ الَّذِيْ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَلِتُنْذِرَ اُمَّ
الْقُرٰى وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا ۗ وَالَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِهٖ وَهُمْ عَلٰى
صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُوْنَ ﴿٩٢﴾ وَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا اَوْ قَالَ
اُوْحِيَ اِلَيَّ وَلَمْ يُوْحَ اِلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ وَّمَنْ قَالَ سَاُنْزِلُ مِثْلَ مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ ۗ
وَلَوْ تَرٰٓى اِذِ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ فِيْ غَمَرٰتِ الْمَوْتِ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ بَاسِطُوْٓا اَيْدِيْهِمْ ۚ
اَخْرِجُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ ۗ اَلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُوْنِ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَقُوْلُوْنَ عَلَى
اللّٰهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَكُنْتُمْ عَنْ اٰيٰتِهٖ تَسْتَكْبِرُوْنَ ﴿٩٣﴾ وَلَقَدْ جِئْتُمُوْنَا فُرَادٰى كَمَا
خَلَقْنٰكُمْ اَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَّتَرَكْتُمْ مَّا خَوَّلْنٰكُمْ وَرَآءَ ظُهُوْرِكُمْ ۚ وَمَا نَرٰى مَعَكُمْ
شُفَعَآءَكُمُ الَّذِيْنَ زَعَمْتُمْ اَنَّهُمْ فِيْكُمْ شُرَكٰٓؤُا ۗ لَقَدْ تَّقَطَّعَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَضَلَّ
عَنْكُمْ مَّا كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُوْنَ ﴿٩٤﴾ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ فَالِقُ الْحَبِّ وَالنَّوٰى ۗ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ
مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَمُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتِ مِنَ الْحَيِّ ۗ ذٰلِكُمُ اللّٰهُ فَاَنّٰى تُؤْفَكُوْنَ ﴿٩٥﴾ فَالِقُ
الْاِصْبَاحِ ۚ وَجَعَلَ الَّيْلَ سَكَنًا وَّالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ حُسْبَانًا ۗ ذٰلِكَ تَقْدِيْرُ

This is Allah's Guidance by which He guides anyone of His servants He pleases: but if any of His people had ever practised *shirk*, all the good deeds they had done would have been rendered vain.[56] Such were the people on whom We bestowed the Book, the Judgement and the Prophethood.[57] Now, if these people do not believe in it (it does not matter); We have bestowed this favour upon others who are not ungrateful to it.[58] O Muḥammad, those were the people who were rightly guided by Allah; so you should also follow their way and say, "I ask no recompense from you for showing this (Guidance); this is an admonition to all the people of the world". 88-90

Those people formed quite a wrong estimate of Allah, when they said, "Allah has not sent down anything to any man." Ask them: "Then who sent down the Book, which Moses brought: which was Light and Guidance for mankind: which you have divided into fragments, a part of which you show to the people and most of it you hide from them: by which you were given that knowledge which neither you nor your forefathers possessed?"[60] – Just say, "Allah", and then leave them alone to play with their useless arguments. (Like that Book) this is a Book which We have sent down; it is a blessed Book, it confirms that which was sent down before it, and this has been sent down so that you should warn the people of this central place (Makkah) and those who dwell around it. Those, who believe in the Hereafter, believe in this Book, and observe their prescribed Prayers punctually.[61] And who could be more wicked than the one who invents a falsehood about Allah or says, "A Revelation has come to me," whereas no Revelation has come to him, or says, "I will also send down the like of what God has sent down?" Would that you could see these wicked people, when they are in the agonies of death, and the angels are out-stretching their hands and saying, "Come, yield up your soul; today you shall be awarded a disgraceful torment for the false things you attributed to Allah and for the rebellion you showed against His Revelations." (And Allah will add,) "So, you have come before Us all alone, as We created you at first. Now, you have left behind all that We gave to you in the world; and now We do not see with you those intercessors who, you believed, had a share in moulding your destinies: all the relations between you have been cut off, and all those, in whom you trusted, have left you in the lurch." 91-94

95-96 Allah is the splitter of the seed — grain and the fruit stone;[62] it is He Who brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living.[63] It is Allah Who does all these things: where, then, are you being misled? He causes the dawn to appear out of the curtain of the night; it is He Who has ordained the night for rest and determined the time of the rising and the setting of the moon and the sun: all these things have been determined by the same All Powerful and the All Wise One.

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54. The Prophet Abraham asked the *mushrikīn* to remember the fact that his Lord, whom they also acknowledged as their Lord, had the knowledge of everything and was fully aware of what they were doing. Then he posed the question in order to rouse them from their heedlessness towards the Message and use their common-sense to consider the reality.

The Arabic word *tadhakkur* contains this sense.

55. Some commentators are of the opinion that the people of Prophet Abraham did not believe in Allah or were ignorant of His existence and regarded their gods as the sole masters of the universe. Accordingly, they have based their comments of this passage and others about Prophet Abraham on this assumption. Obviously, they are wrong because the whole passage clearly shows that those people did not deny Allah as the Creator of the earth and heavens, but were guilty of associating others with Allah in His Godhead and Sovereignty. This is clear from these and other words of the Prophet Abraham:

"..... there is no reason why I should fear those whom you have made partners with Allah." Moreover, the manner, in which he mentions Allah, while addressing his people, shows that they also believed in Allah but associated other partners with Him as well.

The word *zulm* that occurs in v. 82 stands for *shirk* as translated. When some Companions mistook it for sinfulness, the Holy Prophet himself removed their misunderstanding saying, "Here it means *shirk*."

In this connection, it will also be interesting to note that this most important event of the life of Prophet Abraham which has been described in this para and which was the starting point of his great Mission, has not been mentioned at all in the Bible. The Talmud, however, mentions it, but it differs from the Qur'ān in two things:

(1) In it the order is "from the sun to the stars and to God" but it is the other way round in the Qur'ān.

(2) It states that, when he said about the sun, "This is my Lord," he worshipped it also at the same time and did the same with the moon.

56. That is, "Even if the above-mentioned people had been guilty of *shirk* like you, they would never have been exalted to such high ranks. This is because *shirk* is such a heinous sin that it destroys good works. It is just possible that any such person might have won fame as a great conqueror by ruthless destruction, or might have amassed fabulous wealth by foul means and become a notorious wealthy man like Korah or done some infamous thing and won name for himself but he could never have won the exalted position of being the leader of the pious and the right guided. They won the unique distinction of being the source of virtue and guidance for the whole world because they scrupulously avoided *shirk* and steadfastly followed the way of God-worship.

57. Here it has been stated that three things had been bestowed on the Prophet: (1) The Book, Divine Guidance. (2) The Judgement the good sense to understand that Guidance and the capability to apply its principles to the affairs of life and the God-given ability to form correct opinions about the problems of life. (3) The Prophethood the office of guiding the people in accordance with the Divine Guidance.

58. That is,it does not matter at all, if these disbelievers and *mushrikīn* have rejected the Guidance of Allah. We have raised a Community of the Believers, who appreciate fully the worth of this blessing.

59. The context in which the words, "Allah has not sent down anything to any man," occur and their refutation clearly show that these were the words of the Jews. They uttered these words when the disbelievers and the *mushrikīn* of Arabia asked them, "Tell us whether the Word of Allah has really been sent down to this man, Muḥammad." This question had arisen because the Holy Prophet claimed, " I am a Prophet and the Book is being sent down to me." The Quraish and the *mushrik* Arabs turned to the Jews because they possessed the Book and believed in the Prophets and could speak with authority. Therefore, their answer provided the opponents with a strong weapon against Islam and they repeated the answer as an argument to dissuade the people from it. That is why their answer has been cited here and refuted.

Here a possible doubt should also be removed: How can a Jew, who believes that the Torah had been sent down by God, say, "Allah has not sent down anything to any man?" A little thinking will show that a person in his obduracy

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الْعَزِيْزِ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿٩٧﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِيْ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ النُّجُوْمَ لِتَهْتَدُوْا بِهَا فِيْ ظُلُمٰتِ
الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ ۭ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٩٧﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْشَاَكُمْ
مِّنْ نَّفْسٍ وَّاحِدَةٍ فَمُسْتَقَرٌّ وَّمُسْتَوْدَعٌ ۭ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّفْقَهُوْنَ ﴿٩٨﴾
وَهُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاۗءِ مَاۗءً ۚ فَاَخْرَجْنَا بِهٖ نَبَاتَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَاَخْرَجْنَا
مِنْهُ خَضِرًا نُّخْرِجُ مِنْهُ حَبًّا مُّتَرَاكِبًا ۚ وَمِنَ النَّخْلِ مِنْ طَلْعِهَا قِنْوَانٌ
دَانِيَةٌ وَّجَنّٰتٍ مِّنْ اَعْنَابٍ وَّالزَّيْتُوْنَ وَالرُّمَّانَ مُشْتَبِهًا وَّغَيْرَ مُتَشَابِهٍ ۭ
اُنْظُرُوْٓا اِلٰى ثَمَرِهٖٓ اِذَآ اَثْمَرَ وَيَنْعِهٖ ۭ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكُمْ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُّؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٩٩﴾
وَجَعَلُوْا لِلّٰهِ شُرَكَاۗءَ الْجِنَّ وَخَلَقَهُمْ وَخَرَقُوْا لَهٗ بَنِيْنَ وَبَنٰتٍۢ بِغَيْرِ
عِلْمٍ ۭ سُبْحٰنَهٗ وَتَعٰلٰى عَمَّا يَصِفُوْنَ ﴿١٠٠﴾ بَدِيْعُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۭ اَنّٰى يَكُوْنُ
لَهٗ وَلَدٌ وَّلَمْ تَكُنْ لَّهٗ صَاحِبَةٌ ۭ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ۚ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
عَلِيْمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾ ذٰلِكُمُ اللّٰهُ رَبُّكُمْ ۚ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَاعْبُدُوْهُ ۚ وَ
هُوَ عَلٰي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَّكِيْلٌ ﴿١٠٢﴾ لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْاَبْصَارُ ۡ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْاَبْصَارَ ۚ وَ
هُوَ اللَّطِيْفُ الْخَبِيْرُ ﴿١٠٣﴾ قَدْ جَاۗءَكُمْ بَصَاۗىِٕرُ مِنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ۚ فَمَنْ اَبْصَرَ فَلِنَفْسِهٖ ۚ
وَمَنْ عَمِيَ فَعَلَيْهَا ۭ وَمَآ اَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِحَفِيْظٍ ﴿١٠٤﴾ وَكَذٰلِكَ نُصَرِّفُ الْاٰيٰتِ
وَلِيَقُوْلُوْا دَرَسْتَ وَلِنُبَيِّنَهٗ لِقَوْمٍ يَّعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿١٠٥﴾ اِتَّبِعْ مَآ اُوْحِيَ اِلَيْكَ مِنْ
رَّبِّكَ ۚ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَاَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ﴿١٠٦﴾ وَلَوْ شَاۗءَ اللّٰهُ مَآ اَشْرَكُوْا ۭ
وَمَا جَعَلْنٰكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيْظًا ۚ وَمَآ اَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَكِيْلٍ ﴿١٠٧﴾ وَلَا تَسُبُّوا
الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللّٰهَ عَدْوًۢا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۭ كَذٰلِكَ
زَيَّنَّا لِكُلِّ اُمَّةٍ عَمَلَهُمْ ۠ ثُمَّ اِلٰى رَبِّهِمْ مَّرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوْا

(١٢) ع (١٨)

And it is He Who has set up the stars for you so that you may find your way in the deep darkness of the land and sea. Behold! We have made Our Signs clear for those who possess knowledge.[64] And it is He Who created you from one single soul[65] and provided for each of you a dwelling place and a repository. We have made these Signs clear for those who are men of understanding.[66] And it is He Who sent down rain-water from the sky and thereby caused every kind of vegetation to grow, and then with it produced green fields and trees and from them brought forth close growing grain and from the blossoms of palm-trees brought forth laden sheaths of clustering dates and vineyards and olivegroves and gardens of pomegranates : though their fruits resemble each other yet each has its distinctive quality. Behold ! how they bring forth fruit and how their fruits ripen. for there are indeed Signs in these things for those who believe. Yet they set up the Jinn as partners with Allah,[67] whereas He is their Creator; they have also invented for Him sons and daughters without having any knowledge[68] whereas He is absolutely free from and exalted far above the things they say. He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth: how should He have a son, when He has no consort? He has created everything and He has the Knowledge of verything. This then is, Allah, your Lord; there is no deity but He is the Creator of everything : so worship Him alone, for He is the Guardian of all things, No sight can comprehend Him but He comprehends all sorts of sight, for He is All-Comprehensive and All-Aware. 97-103

Behold: Lights of discernment have come to you from your Lord: now, whoever makes use of his sight, will do so to his own good, and whoever behaves like a blind person will do so to his own harm; I am not a keeper over you.[69] 104

Thus do We state Our Revelations over and over again indifferent ways so that the disbelievers might say, "You have learnt these (not from Allah but) from someone else;" and so that We may make the Reality plain to those who have knowledge.[70] Therefore, O Muhammad, go on following what has been sent down to you from your Lord, for there is no god besides that One Lord, and leave these *mushrikin* alone. Had Allah willed (He Himself could have so arranged that), they would not have committed *shirk*. And We have not appointed you a keeper over them, nor have you been made their 105-108

guardian.[71] And (O Believers), do not revile those whom they invoke besides Allah lest they should, in their ignorance, revile Allah[72] (besides committing *shirk*). We have thus made the deeds of every people seem fair to them.[73] Ultimately, they shall have to return to their Lord; then He will let them know what they have been doing.

Contd. from p.543]

often utters such things as are against his fundamental principles merely to refute his opponent. As the Jews were bent upon refuting his claim to Prophethood, they had been so blinded by their opposition to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be peace), that in denying his Prophethood they even denied the very office of Prophethood.

"Those people formed quite a wrong estimate of Allah ... "means that they committed a grave error in evaluating His powers and wisdom. For the person who says: "Allah has not sent down the knowledge of the Truth and Guidance for life," makes either of the two wrong estimates: (1) He believes that Allah has not power to send down Revelation to any man, and this is a wrong estimate of the powers of Allah; (2) He thinks that though Allah has given man intelligence and authority to exploit the resources of nature, He has made no arrangement for his right guidance, but has left him to act indiscriminately in the world, and this is a wrong estimate of the wisdom of Allah.

60. This answer is meant for the Jews,who had furnished the disbelievers and the *mushrikīn* with the arguments that "Allah has not sent down anything to any man..." To refute their objection it has particularly been pointed out that the Torah was sent down to Moses by Allah, for they themselves believed and could not deny that the Torah had been sent down to Moses by Allah . Thus, it was by itself a refutation of their assertion that "Allah has not sent down anything to any man.." It also proved at least that the Word of God can be sent down to a man, as it had been sent down to Moses.

61. After showing in the preceding verse (91) that the Word of God can be sent down to a man and that it had actually been sent down to Moses, a man, the Qur'ān in this verse proceeds to prove that the Word, which has been sent down to Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him), is actually the Word of God. Four things have been put forward as a proof thereof:

(1). It is a blessed Book: it presents the best principles for the welfare and true success of man; it teaches the right creeds and inculcates all kinds of virtues and exhorts the people of follow a high standard of morality for leading a pure life. At the same time, it does not teach in any way whatsoever any vice — selfishness, narrow-mindedness, cruelty,

obscenity and the like, which you have interpolated in abundance in your sacred Books.

(2). It does not present anything different form the Guidance contained in the former Scriptures: nay, it testifies to the same teaching that had been presented in them.

(3). This Book aims to fulfil the very object for which the former Books had been sent, that is, to shake up and rouse those people who had become forgetful of the noble object for which they had been created, and to warn them of the evil consequences of their wicked ways.

(4). The Message of this Book has not attracted those from among mankind who are the worshippers of this world and slaves of their lusts, but only such people as are able to see the higher things of life beyond the narrow bounds of their worldly life. Then the most obvious characteristic of the revolution that this Book has brought about in their lives is that they stand out conspicuously among the people around them for their piety and God-worship. Is it possible for any book invented by an impostor, who has the audacity to say that it is from Allah, to produce such excellent results?

62. That is, it is Allah Who splits open the seed and the fruitstone under ground and causes those to grow into plants or trees.

63. It means that Allah creates living creatures out of lifeless matter and discharges lifeless matter out of living creatures.

64. That is, "We have made clear the Signs which show conclusively that there is only One Allah and that none else has the Divine attributes or powers and none else is entitled to any of the Divine rights. However, those who lack knowledge cannot reach the Reality by means of these Signs; only those who observe the phenomena of Nature in a rational way can attain this precious wealth."

65. That is, Allah has created the whole human race from one single being, Adam, who was the first man.

66. That is "Only Men of understanding can find clear Signs of the Reality in the creation of human race and in the different functions allotted to man and woman for its reproduction at the different stages of human life from birth to death. But those, who live like animals and hanker after the fulfilment of the lusts of the flesh, can see nothing worthwhile even in these Signs."

67. That is, in spite of these clear Signs, some people have set up as His partners some hidden beings that are merely the creations of their own imagination

and whims. They have gone so far in their ignorance as to allot different powers and duties to them in the management of the universe and in determining the destiny of man. For instance, one has been made the good of rain and another of regetation; one is the goddess of wealth and another of disease, etc. Such absurd beliefs have been prevalent among all polytheistic peoples about spirits, devils, monks, gods and goddesses.

68 The pagan Arabs called the angels "daughters" of God. Likewise some *mushrik* communities have invented even a genealogical tree of gods and goddesses descending from God.

69. In the sentence, "I am not a keeper over you," Allah is speaking in the first person on His Prophet's behalf. Just as the second person in the Qur'ān denotes different people at different places, so the first person also denotes different beings at different places. As is well known, in some places, the second person is the Holy Prophet or the Believers or the people of the Book, and at other places it is the disbelievers or the *mushrikīn* or the Quraish or the Arabs or the human beings in general, though the Qur'ān is meant to be the guidance for all mankind. Likewise at some places, the first person is Allah Himself and at others it is the angel, the bearer of the Revelation, or a group of angels, or the Prophets or the Believers, though, in every case, the Words are of Allah. However, one can determine the real "person" with the help of the context.

The meaning of the sentence. "I am not a keeper over you," is : "My only duty is to present the guidance before you. Then it is for you to open your eyes to see it or to keep your eyes shut like a blind man. It is not my duty to force open the eyes of those, who deliberately keep them shut and to make them see what they do not see."

70. The different ways of expression, in which the Revelation has been couched, are a test for the people, because they help to discriminate the counterfeit from the genuine. The same thing has already been stated in Al-Baqarah, II: 26, in connection with the mention of insignificant things like flies, gnats, etc. in the parables of the Qur'ān. Just as the mention of these insignificant things helps the seekers in finding the Truth, in the same way the different ways of expression help those, who have knowledge and make use of it, to think deeply about their aims and objects and learn lessons for their own good. On the contrary, those people, who are bigoted, pay no attention to the subject-matter, but begin to think on other lines. For instance, they begin to conjecture how this illiterate man can compose such excellent discourses. Thus, instead of judging the Qur'ān from its excellent themes to be the Revelation from Allah, they turn to every other possible source and say, "You have learnt this from such and such a one." Then in the "light" of

this so-called successful "Research" into the source of the Qur'ān, they conclude that it could not be the Book of God.

71. It means: "You have been appointed to invite the people to the Message and not to keep watch over them like a police inspector. Therefore your only duty is to present the Message to the people and try your best to convince them of the Truth. After that, if someone does not accept the Truth, leave him alone. You have not been appointed to force the people to accept it so as to leave no worshipper of falsehood within the range of your Prophethood. Therefore you should not worry yourself and try to make them open their eyes which they have deliberately shut. If Allah had, in His Wisdom, willed that there should remain no worshipper of falsehood, He would not have entrusted you with this task. He could have made each and every human being a follower of the Truth, merely by a single word of His Command. But this is not the object of the creation of man. The real object is that man be given the freedom of choice between the Truth and falsehood. And then by presenting the light of the Truth before him, he be tested which one of the two he chooses. Now the right course for you is to follow the Right Way yourself and to invite others to follow it. Then you should make those, who accept it, your friends and not to forsake them in any case, even though they are very insignificant in the eyes of the worldly people. On the other hand, you should leave those alone who do not accept it and let them go to the evil end to which they themselves want to go and persist in doing so."

72. The followers of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) have been advised not to lose their balance in zeal for preaching but to remain within proper limits when engaged in discussions and polemics with the non-Muslims and to refrain from offending against their creeds and from vilifying their leaders and objects of worship, for this will repel and alienate them all the more from the Truth.

73. Allah has ascribed their deeds to Himself, for everything that takes place in accordance with the Laws of Nature does, in fact, happens by the command of Allah. (Please refer to E.N. 17 above). As Allah is the Author of all the Laws of Nature, everything happens by His Command: therefore, Allah says, "We have made the deeds of every people seem fair to them." The human beings would, however, express the same thing, saying, "This has happened according to the Law of Nature."

يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٠٨﴾ وَاَقْسَمُوْا بِاللّٰهِ جَهْدَ اَيْمَانِهِمْ لَئِنْ جَآءَتْهُمْ اٰيَةٌ لَّيُؤْمِنُنَّ
بِهَا ؕ قُلْ اِنَّمَا الْاٰيٰتُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ وَمَا يُشْعِرُكُمْ ۙ اَنَّهَآ اِذَا جَآءَتْ لَا
يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿١٠٩﴾ وَنُقَلِّبُ اَفْـِٕدَتَهُمْ وَاَبْصَارَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوْا بِهٖٓ اَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ
وَّنَذَرُهُمْ فِيْ طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُوْنَ ﴿١١٠﴾ ع

(١٢ ع ١٠ ١٩ الجزء ٨)

وَلَوْ اَنَّنَا نَزَّلْنَآ اِلَيْهِمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ وَكَلَّمَهُمُ الْمَوْتٰى وَحَشَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ كُلَّ
شَيْءٍ قُبُلًا مَّا كَانُوْا لِيُؤْمِنُوْٓا اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّشَآءَ اللّٰهُ وَلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَهُمْ
يَجْهَلُوْنَ ﴿١١١﴾ وَكَذٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيٰطِيْنَ الْاِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ
يُوْحِيْ بَعْضُهُمْ اِلٰى بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُوْرًا ؕ وَلَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّكَ مَا
فَعَلُوْهُ فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُوْنَ ﴿١١٢﴾ وَلِتَصْغٰٓى اِلَيْهِ اَفْـِٕدَةُ الَّذِيْنَ لَا
يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ وَلِيَرْضَوْهُ وَلِيَقْتَرِفُوْا مَا هُمْ مُّقْتَرِفُوْنَ ﴿١١٣﴾ اَفَغَيْرَ اللّٰهِ
اَبْتَغِيْ حَكَمًا وَّهُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْزَلَ اِلَيْكُمُ الْكِتٰبَ مُفَصَّلًا ؕ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ
الْكِتٰبَ يَعْلَمُوْنَ اَنَّهٗ مُنَزَّلٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِيْنَ ﴿١١٤﴾
وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَّعَدْلًا ؕ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمٰتِهٖ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيْعُ
الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿١١٥﴾ وَاِنْ تُطِعْ اَكْثَرَ مَنْ فِي الْاَرْضِ يُضِلُّوْكَ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنْ
يَّتَّبِعُوْنَ اِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَاِنْ هُمْ اِلَّا يَخْرُصُوْنَ ﴿١١٦﴾ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ مَنْ
يَّضِلُّ عَنْ سَبِيْلِهٖ ۚ وَهُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِيْنَ ﴿١١٧﴾ فَكُلُوْا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللّٰهِ
عَلَيْهِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ بِاٰيٰتِهٖ مُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١١٨﴾ وَمَا لَكُمْ اَلَّا تَاْكُلُوْا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللّٰهِ
عَلَيْهِ وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُمْ مَّا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ اِلَّا مَا اضْطُرِرْتُمْ اِلَيْهِ ؕ وَاِنَّ
كَثِيْرًا لَّيُضِلُّوْنَ بِاَهْوَآئِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ؕ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِالْمُعْتَدِيْنَ ﴿١١٩﴾

They declare with solemn oaths by Allah that if a Sign[74] (i.r. a miracle) comes before them, they will believe in it (your Prophethood). O Muḥammad, tell them, "Allah alone can show Signs."[75] And what will make you (O Muḥammad) realize that, even if the Signs come, they would not believe?[76] And We are turning away their hearts and eyes from the Truth because of that attitude of theirs which prompted them to disbelieve in the first instance, [77] so We leave them to wander about in their rebellion. Even if We had sent down angels to them and made the dead to speak with them and ranged all the things of the world before them (as a proof thereof), they would still not have believed unless it were Allah's will that they should believe, [78] but most of them talk nonsense. And so have we always set against every Prophet enemies from among satans of men and satans of jinns who have been inspiring one another with charming things in order to delude the minds.[79] But, had your Lord willed, they would never have done so.[80] So leave them alone to continue their false allegations. (We have been allowing them to do all this) so that the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter might be allured (by this charming delusion) and they be well pleased with it, and that they might earn the evils they wish to earn. 109-113

This being so, should I seek a judge other than Allah, whereas He has sent down to you the Book with full details?[81] And the people whom We gave the Book (before you) know that this Book has been sent down to you with the Truth from your Lord; so you should not be of those who have doubts.[82] The Word of your Lord is perfect in regard to Truth and justice; there is none who can make any change in His decrees for He hears everything and knows everything. 114-115

And O Muhammad if you obey most of the dwellers of the earth, they will lead you astray from Allah's Way, for they follow nothing but guess-work and indulge in mere conjectures.[83] In fact, your Lord knows best those who have gone astray from His Way and also He knows those who are on the Right Path. 116-117

Then you should eat the flesh of the animal over which Allah's name has been mentioned, if you sincerely believe in His Revelations.[84] And why should you not eat that thing over which Allah's name has been mentioned when He has already given you explicit knowledge of those things which He has forbidden for you, 118-119

except in a case of extreme helplessness?[85] As regards the majority of the people, they, following their caprices, say misleading things without any knowledge. Your Lord best knows these transgressors.

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74. Here "Sign" stands for such a tangible miracle seeing which they should have no alternative left but to acknowledge that Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was a true Prophet appointed by Allah.

75. That is, "I have no power to bring about and present Signs, for these are entirely in the power of Allah and He may or may not show them."

76. These words are addressed to those Muslims, who ardently wished (and sometimes even expressed their wish) that their misguided brethren should be shown such a Sign as might bring them to the Right Way. To this Allah has answered, 'You should realize that they would not believe even if a Sign were shown to them, for this demand is merely a pretext for their disbelief."

77. That is, there has been no change in their mentality since the first time they heard and rejected the Message of the Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him). They are still following the same crooked and perverted way of looking at the Message and, therefore, are unable to see and understand it rightly.

78. That is, "As they are not going to reject falsehood and accept the Truth by making a free and deliberate choice, the only alternative left for making them follow it is that Allah should force it upon them: He should change their nature so as to deprive them of the freedom of thought and action like other species which have not been made responsible for what they do. But this is against the wisdom of the object for which Allah has created man. You should not, therefore, expect that Allah would make them believers by His supernatural intervention."

79. Allah is consoling His Messenger, so as to say, "You should not worry at all about the united and active antagonism of the satans from among men and jinn against your Mission. This is not a new thing only happening to you for it has always been happening like this to the Messengers. Whenever a Messenger came to show the Right Way, all the satanic powers girded up their loins to make his Mission a failure."

"Charming things" are all those devices, schemes, suspicions, objections, etc., that are employed by the satans to excite and incite the common people against the Message and the Messenger who invites them to the Truth. Then all these things have been called the means of deceit and delusion as a whole, for all the weapons that the opponent use against the Truth are, in fact, deceptions not only for others but also for the deceivers themselves, though they appear to be very useful and effective weapons.

80. We have already explained in E.N. 73 above the fact of this matter, but the fine distinction between Allah's "will" (*mashiyat*) and His approval (*rada*) should also be kept in mind, otherwise there might arise very serious misunderstandings. It must be clearly understood that nothing whatsoever can happen without the "will" and permission of Allah, for no incident can happen, unless Allah makes room for it in His vast scheme and provides means for its happening. But it does not necessarily mean that Allah also approves of and is pleased with that incident. For instance, no thief can commit theft, no murderer can kill, no tyrant can be tyrannical, no breaker of peace can cause disorder, no unbeliever can disbelieve and no *mushrik* can commit *shirk*, etc., etc., without the "Will" of Allah. Likewise, no believer can have Faith and no pious person can be pious unless it be the "Will" of Allah; yet He is not pleased with the first kind of bad deeds, whereas He is pleased with and approves of and likes the second kind of good deeds. It is true that the "Will" of Allah is working for an ultimate great good, but that can only come about by means of a conflict between light and darkness, good and bad, peace and disorder. Therefore, He allows, for the sake of His great good designs, the necessary freedom both to the powers of obedience and to those of disobeidence, of piety and sin, of Prophethood and the forces of evil, so that both might be allowed to perform the deeds of their own choice and to those of His creatures (men and jinn) who have been delegated with a limited authority and the consequent responsibility. Everyone is free to make a choice of good deeds or of bad deeds for himself in this world. Both the good and the bad people are allowed to have the necessary means, as far as it suits and fits into the Divine Design, but only those who make a choice of good works merit His pleasure and approval, for Allah likes that His servants should make the right use of their freedom of choice and adopt good instead of evil.

In this connection, it will be worthwhile to understand why Allah mentions over and over again that it is by His "Will" that the enemies of Truth have been allowed to carry on their nefarious activities. This is to impress upon the Holy Prophet, and through him on his followers, that the nature of their work is different from that of the angels, who carry out the Commands of Allah without meeting with any resistance. Their Mission, requires that in their conflict with the wicked and rebellious people, they should exert their utmost to make the Way of Allah dominant over their ways. That is why it is the "Will" of Allah to allow such people as have deliberately chosen the way of rebellion against Allah to exert their worst in pursuance of their choice. Likewise, He allows the Believers also full opportunity to exert their utmost in the service and obedience of Allah that they have deliberately chosen. Though He is pleased with and gives His help and succour to the Believers and guides them to the Right Way because they do the deeds He likes them to do, yet they should not expect that Allah will force, by His

supernatural intervention, the unbelievers to believe, if they do not want to believe by their free choice; or that He will remove by force from their way those satans amongst men and jinn who have deliberately chosen to use all the powers of their hearts and minds and bodies against the Truth in order to block its way. They should note it well that, if they sincerely intend to work for the cause of truth, virtue and righteousness, they will have to prove this by putting up hard struggle and exerting their utmost in their conflict with the worshippers of falsehood. If Allah had willed to demolish falsehood and make the Truth dominate by miracles, there was no need to entrust this work to the Believers for in that case He Himself could have arranged the things so as to leave no satan in the world and no room for *shirk* and disbelief to make their appearance.

81. The 'speaker' in this sentence is the Holy Prophet and the addressees are his followers, who desired that a Sign should be shown for the conversion of the disbelievers. They have been told that no Sign will be shown, for Allah had made all the realities plain in the Qur'an. As regards their conflict with falsehood, He has decreed that the followers of the Truth will have to exert for its domination in the natural way without expecting any supernatural intervention from Him. The Holy Prophet has, therefore, been asked to declare, "Should I, then, seek some authority higher than Allah to revise His decree and to send down such a miracle as should force them to believe?" (Please refer also to E.N. 76).

82. That is, "These principles, that have been laid down for the domination of the Truth, are not new ones which might have been invented today to explain away the difficulties and obstacles of the Way. All those people, who possess the knowledge of the Divine Books and are acquainted with the Mission of the Prophets, will bear testimony that whatever is being stated in the Qur'ān is the very Truth, which is eternal and has never changed."

83. The right thing for a seeker-after-truth is not to consider what way the majority of the people are following because that is based on guess-work instead of knowledge. Their beliefs, theories, philosophies, principles of life and laws are the result of guess-work and are, therefore, sure to mislead. In contrast to that, the way of life with which Allah is pleased, can only be the Way which Allah Himself has taught. Therefore, the seeker-after-truth should adopt that way and steadfastly follow it, even though he is left alone on it.

84. Among the many wrong things which the people have adopted as religious laws without any Divine sanction are also the restrictions they have imposed on the articles of food. That is why some people have made certain things lawful whereas they are unlawful in the sight of God, and certain other things unlawful, though Allah has declared them to be lawful. In this connection, the most absurd thing on which some of the former people insisted and on which some

of the modern people also insist, is that if Allah's name is pronounced at the slaughter of an animal, it is unlawful and if it is slaughtered without mentioning Allah's name over it, it is quite lawful. In this verse Allah has refuted such ideas and commanded the Muslims to discard all such whims and superstitions which have been invented by the unbelievers and the *mushrikīn* and break all such restrictions which the people have imposed on themselves against the Guidance of Allah, if they sincerely believe in it. They should, therefore, make unlawful only that which Allah has made unlawful and *vice versa*.

85. Please see vv. 114-116, *An-Nahl*. Incidentally, this reference also shows that Sūrah *An-Nahl* was revealed before *Al-An'ām*.

وَذَرُوْا ظَاهِرَ الْاِثْمِ وَ بَاطِنَهٗ ؕ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَكْسِبُوْنَ الْاِثْمَ سَيُجْزَوْنَ
بِمَا كَانُوْا يَقْتَرِفُوْنَ ﴿۱۲۰﴾ وَلَا تَاْكُلُوْا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ اسْمُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْهِ وَاِنَّهٗ
لَفِسْقٌ ؕ وَاِنَّ الشَّيٰطِيْنَ لَيُوْحُوْنَ اِلٰٓى اَوْلِيٰٓـئِهِمْ لِيُجَادِلُوْكُمْ ۚ وَاِنْ اَطَعْتُمُوْهُمْ
اِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿۱۲۱﴾ اَوَ مَنْ كَانَ مَيْتًا فَاَحْيَيْنٰهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهٗ نُوْرًا يَّمْشِيْ بِهٖ
فِى النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَّثَلُهٗ فِى الظُّلُمٰتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِّنْهَا ؕ كَذٰلِكَ زُيِّنَ
لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿۱۲۲﴾ وَكَذٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا فِىْ كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ اَكٰبِرَ مُجْرِمِيْهَا
لِيَمْكُرُوْا فِيْهَا ؕ وَمَا يَمْكُرُوْنَ اِلَّا بِاَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُوْنَ ﴿۱۲۳﴾ وَاِذَا جَآءَتْهُمْ
اٰيَةٌ قَالُوْا لَنْ نُّؤْمِنَ حَتّٰى نُؤْتٰى مِثْلَ مَآ اُوْتِىَ رُسُلُ اللّٰهِ ؔۘ اَللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ
حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهٗ ؕ سَيُصِيْبُ الَّذِيْنَ اَجْرَمُوْا صَغَارٌ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ وَ
عَذَابٌ شَدِيْدٌ ۢ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَمْكُرُوْنَ ﴿۱۲۴﴾ فَمَنْ يُّرِدِ اللّٰهُ اَنْ يَّهْدِيَهٗ يَشْرَحْ
صَدْرَهٗ لِلْاِسْلَامِ ۚ وَمَنْ يُّرِدْ اَنْ يُّضِلَّهٗ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهٗ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا كَاَنَّمَا
يَصَّعَّدُ فِى السَّمَآءِ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ يَجْعَلُ اللّٰهُ الرِّجْسَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿۱۲۵﴾
وَهٰذَا صِرَاطُ رَبِّكَ مُسْتَقِيْمًا ؕ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّذَّكَّرُوْنَ ﴿۱۲۶﴾
لَهُمْ دَارُ السَّلٰمِ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿۱۲۷﴾ وَيَوْمَ
يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيْعًا ۚ يٰمَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ قَدِ اسْتَكْثَرْتُمْ مِّنَ الْاِنْسِ ۚ وَقَالَ
اَوْلِيٰٓـؤُهُمْ مِّنَ الْاِنْسِ رَبَّنَا اسْتَمْتَعَ بَعْضُنَا بِبَعْضٍ وَّبَلَغْنَآ اَجَلَنَا الَّذِىْٓ
اَجَّلْتَ لَنَا ؕ قَالَ النَّارُ مَثْوٰىكُمْ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَآ اِلَّا مَا شَآءَ اللّٰهُ ؕ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ
حَكِيْمٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۱۲۸﴾ وَكَذٰلِكَ نُوَلِّىْ بَعْضَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ بَعْضًا بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ ﴿۱۲۹﴾
يٰمَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ وَالْاِنْسِ اَلَمْ يَاْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْكُمْ يَقُصُّوْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ اٰيٰتِىْ وَ

And refrain from open sins as well as secret sins: surely those who earn sin shall get the recompense of what they have earned. And do not eat the flesh of the animal over which Allah's name has not been mentioned at the time of slaughter; this indeed is sinful. The satans put doubts and objections into the minds of their friends, so that they should dispute with you,[86] but if you obey them, you are surely *mushrikīn*.[87] 120-121

Can that person, who was first dead, then We gave him life[88] and bestowed upon him the light by which he is able to walk on the right way among the people, be regarded like the one who is blundering about in deep darkness[89] and will not come out of it? Thus have been made seem fair[90] to the disbelievers their deeds and thus have We placed in every habitation the ringleaders of the wicked people to spread the snare of their vile schemes; in fact, they themselves get entangled in the snare of their vile devices but they do not perceive it. 122-123

When a Revelation comes before them, they say, "We will not believe in it unless we are given the like of what has been given to the Messengers of Allah."[91] Allah knows best whom to entrust with His Mission and how to get it conducted. Near is the time when these criminals shall meet with disgrace and a grievous torment from Allah for the evil schemes they were devising. 124

So (the fact is that) whomsoever Allah wills to guide aright, He makes his breast wide open to Islam,[92] and whomsoever He wills to let go astray, He makes his breast narrow and squeezes it so tight that (at the very idea of Islam) he begins to feel as if his soul were climbing up towards the sky. Thus Allah sets the impurity (caused by their deviation from the Way of Islam) over those who do not believe, whereas this Way is the Straight Way of your Lord, and We have made its signs quite clear for those who are amenable to advice. There is an abode of peace[93] for them with their Lord, and He is their Protector because of the good works they are doing. 125-127

On the Day when He will encircle and muster them all together, addressing the jinn,[94] He will say, "O race of jinn, you have exploited fully the human race." And their associates from among the human race will answer, "Our Lord, we both have exploited each 128-129

other fully,[95] and now we have reached the end of our term which You had fixed for us." Then Allah will say, "Well! now the Fire is your abode wherein you shall abide for ever." Only those, whom Allah will deliver, shall escape from it. No doubt your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing.[96] Behold, in this way We will make (in the Hereafter) the wrongdoers the comrades of one another because of what they earned (in the world with mutual co-operation).[97]

86. This is with reference to the different kinds of doubts and objections with which the Jewish scholars used to poison the minds of ignorant Arabs against Islam. According to a tradition of Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, one of the objections taught by the Jews against the Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him) was: "How is it that the one killed by Allah (by natural death) should be unlawful, while the other which is killed by us (by mentioning the name of Allah) should be lawful?" This is an instance of the crooked attitude of those so-called people of the Book. They would invent and pose questions like this before the common people so as to poison their minds with doubts and to arm them with weapons to fight with the Truth.

87. It is also *shirk* to acknowledge the Godhead of Allah and at the same time follow the decrees and ways of those who have turned away from Allah. The acknowledgement of the Oneness of Allah demands that one should obey Allah in all aspects of one's life. So much so that if a person believes that someone else also should be obeyed along with Allah, he would be guilty of committing *shirk* in his creed. And if a person obeys such people as arrogate to themselves the authority of making things lawful and unlawful, in utter disregard of the Guidance of Allah, he would be guilty of practical *shirk*.

88. Here ".... who was first dead" means, "..... who was first in a state of ignorance and lacked understanding;" likewise, ".... then (he) was given life" means "then he was given knowledge and understanding and was restored to that mental state which can recognize the Truth." And the fact is that one who cannot distinguish between right and wrong and does not know the Right Way, might be regarded as alive from the physical point of view, but he does not enjoy that life which makes him a real human being. He is no doubt a living animal, but he is not a living man. A living man is only he who can distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad, righteous and unrighteous.

89. That is, "How can you expect that a man, who has got real understanding of life and recognizes clearly, by the light of Knowledge, the Straight Way from among the countless crooked ways, would live a life like those

who lack understanding and blunder blindly into the darkness of ignorance and folly?"

90. It is the Law of Allah that He makes their deeds seem fair to those who refuse to be guided by the Light which is offered to them and who prefer to tread the crooked paths, even though they are invited to the Right Way. Then they begin to love darkness and like groping their way through it like the blind and to be knocked about throughout their lives. Accordingly, every vice appears to them worth enjoying and every piece of folly a gem of wisdom. After the failure of such an experiment that produces mischief, they get ready for another in the hope that the first failure was due to some "accidental" mistake that will be avoided in future experiments.

91. What they meant was: "We are not going to believe in the claim of the Messengers that an angel came to them with a Message from God, unless the angel comes directly to us to deliver the Message of Allah."

92. "He makes his breast wide open to Islam" means: "Allah makes him fully convinced of the truth of Islam by removing from his mind and heart every kind of doubt, suspicion, hesitation and indecision about Islam."

93. "Abode of peace": Heaven, the place of perfect peace and happiness, where the dwellers will be immune from every kind of calamity and misery.

94. Here by the "jinn" are meant the "satans of jinn."

95. That is, "Every one of us made an unfair use of the other and cheated him for selfish ends."

96. As Allah is All-Wise and All-Knowing, both punishment and forgiveness will be based on wisdom and knowledge and, therefore, will be reasonable and just. He will forgive only that wrongdoer, whom He knows not to be personally responsible for his crime and liable to punishment.

97. That is, just as they were accomplices in their sins and crimes in the world, so they shall also share the punishment in the Hereafter.

يُنْذِرُوْنَكُمْ لِقَآءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هٰذَا ؕ قَالُوْا شَهِدْنَا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِنَا وَ غَرَّتْهُمُ الْحَيٰوةُ
الدُّنْيَا وَ شَهِدُوْا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ اَنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا كٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿۱۳۰﴾ ذٰلِكَ اَنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ
رَّبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ الْقُرٰى بِظُلْمٍ وَّ اَهْلُهَا غٰفِلُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۱﴾ وَ لِكُلٍّ دَرَجٰتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوْا ؕ
وَ مَا رَبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۲﴾ وَ رَبُّكَ الْغَنِيُّ ذُو الرَّحْمَةِ ؕ اِنْ يَّشَاْ
يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَ يَسْتَخْلِفْ مِنْۢ بَعْدِكُمْ مَّا يَشَآءُ كَمَآ اَنْشَاَكُمْ مِّنْ ذُرِّيَّةِ
قَوْمٍ اٰخَرِيْنَ ﴿۱۳۳﴾ اِنَّ مَا تُوْعَدُوْنَ لَاٰتٍ ۙ وَّ مَآ اَنْتُمْ بِمُعْجِزِيْنَ ﴿۱۳۴﴾ قُلْ
يٰقَوْمِ اعْمَلُوْا عَلٰى مَكَانَتِكُمْ اِنِّيْ عَامِلٌ ۚ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ۙ مَنْ تَكُوْنُ
لَهٗ عَاقِبَةُ الدَّارِ ؕ اِنَّهٗ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۵﴾ وَ جَعَلُوْا لِلّٰهِ مِمَّا ذَرَاَ مِنَ
الْحَرْثِ وَ الْاَنْعَامِ نَصِيْبًا فَقَالُوْا هٰذَا لِلّٰهِ بِزَعْمِهِمْ وَ هٰذَا لِشُرَكَآئِنَا ۚ
فَمَا كَانَ لِشُرَكَآئِهِمْ فَلَا يَصِلُ اِلَى اللّٰهِ ۚ وَ مَا كَانَ لِلّٰهِ فَهُوَ يَصِلُ اِلٰى
شُرَكَآئِهِمْ ؕ سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۶﴾ وَ كَذٰلِكَ زَيَّنَ لِكَثِيْرٍ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ
قَتْلَ اَوْلَادِهِمْ شُرَكَآؤُهُمْ لِيُرْدُوْهُمْ وَ لِيَلْبِسُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ دِيْنَهُمْ ؕ وَ لَوْ
شَآءَ اللّٰهُ مَا فَعَلُوْهُ فَذَرْهُمْ وَ مَا يَفْتَرُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۷﴾ وَ قَالُوْا هٰذِهٖۤ اَنْعَامٌ
وَّ حَرْثٌ حِجْرٌ ۖ لَّا يَطْعَمُهَاۤ اِلَّا مَنْ نَّشَآءُ بِزَعْمِهِمْ وَ اَنْعَامٌ حُرِّمَتْ
ظُهُوْرُهَا وَ اَنْعَامٌ لَّا يَذْكُرُوْنَ اسْمَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْهَا افْتِرَآءً عَلَيْهِ ؕ سَيَجْزِيْهِمْ
بِمَا كَانُوْا يَفْتَرُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۸﴾ وَ قَالُوْا مَا فِيْ بُطُوْنِ هٰذِهِ الْاَنْعَامِ خَالِصَةٌ
لِّذُكُوْرِنَا وَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلٰٓى اَزْوَاجِنَا ۚ وَ اِنْ يَّكُنْ مَّيْتَةً فَهُمْ فِيْهِ شُرَكَآءُ ؕ
سَيَجْزِيْهِمْ وَصْفَهُمْ ؕ اِنَّهٗ حَكِيْمٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۱۳۹﴾ قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِيْنَ قَتَلُوْۤا اَوْلَادَهُمْ
سَفَهًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَّ حَرَّمُوْا مَا رَزَقَهُمُ اللّٰهُ افْتِرَآءً عَلَى اللّٰهِ ؕ قَدْ ضَلُّوْا

(On that occasion Allah will ask them this question also:) "O race of jinn and men, did not the Messengers come to you from among yourselves, who recited My Revelations to you and warned you of the consequences you shall meet with on this Day?" They will reply, "Yes, they did. We bear witness against ourselves."[98] Today this worldly life has deluded them, but at that time, they will themselves bear witness against their selves that they were disbelievers.[99] (This testimony will be taken from them in order to prove that) your Lord would not destroy the habitations unjustly, while their dwellers were ignorant of the Reality.[100] 130-131

The grade of everyone (for recompense) is determined in accordance with his deeds: and your Lord is not unaware of the deeds of the people. Your Lord is All-Sufficient and is full of compassion.[101] If He wills, He may remove you and replace you by whomever He wills, just as He raised you from the offspring of other people. Indeed, the thing which you are being promised shall most surely come;[102] and you have no power to frustrate Allah. O Muhammad, say, "O people, you may do whatever you like in your own way and I am doing whatever I deem right;[103] but you shall soon know who comes out successful in the end; anyhow the fact is that the workers of iniquity can never attain true success." 132-135

These people[104] have assigned a portion to Allah out of the tillage and the cattle He Himslef has created, and say, "This is for Allah," __ so presume they __ "and this is for the partners[105] we have set up with Him." Then the portion assigned to the partners of their own making does not reach Allah, but that assigned to Allah reaches the partners set up by them.[106] What evil decisions they make! 136

And likewise, those whom the *mushrikīn* believe to have a share in Allah's Godhead have made the killing of their own children seem fair to them[107] in order to lead them to ruin[108] and confuse them in their religion.[109] Had Allah willed, they would not have done so; therefore, leave them busy in their false accusations.[110] 137

They say, these cattle and crops are reserved; only those people can eat them, whom we allow. In fact, this is a restriction they themselves have imposed.[111] Then there are some animals which have been forbidden for riding and carrying loads, and there are other 138

animals over which they do not pronounce the name of Allah.[112] They have falsely attributed all this to Allah;[113] before long Allah will recompense them for all that they have falsely attributed to Him.

139 And they say, "Whatever is within the bellies of these cattle is reserved for our males and forbidden to our females, but if it is dead, both may partake of it.[114] Allah will surely recompense them for the things they have fabricated; indeed, He is All Wise, All Knowing.

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98. That is, "We confess that one Messenger after the other came from You and informed us of the Truth but it was our own fault that we did not believe in what they said."

99. They themselves would confess that they were not ignorant of the Truth: it did reach them but they deliberately rejected it.

100. It means that Allah does not desire to allow the guilty ones the opporunity to protest and say, "You did not inform us of the Truth, nor did You send anyone to show us the Right Way. But now when, in our ignorance we have adopted the wrong way, You are going to punish us for it." In order to refute this argument, Allah sent His Messengers and Books to fore-warn mankind and jinn, prior to the execution of His Judgements. If, inspite of this, the people choose wrong ways and are punished for this, they themselves are to belamed and not Allah.

101. "Your Lord is All-Sufficient": "He does not stand in need of any kind of help from you, nor does He need anyone to look after His interests. Therefore, you can do him no harm by your disobedience, nor can you do Him any good by your obedience. Even if all of you rebel against Him, you cannot detract an iota from His Kingdom; nor can you add an iota to it, if all of you decide to obey and worship Him. He needs neither your obedience nor your offering. As a matter of fact, he is showering His countless blessings on you without desiring anything in return from you."

In the context in which the sentence, "He is All-Compassionate", occurs, it implies two things. First, "It is only out of compassion for you that Allah is showing you the Right Way and not for His own interest. It will not serve any interest of His if you follow the Right Way and keep away from the wrong ways: nor will it do Him any harm if you swerve from it. As a matter of fact, you will be serving your own interest and avoiding harm to yourselves by following it. Therefore, it is His kindness that He teaches you the right conduct to enable you to attain higher ranks and restrains you from wrong behaviour that will throw you to the lowest depths of degeneration." Second, "Your Lord is not ruthless: He does

not enjoy punishing you for trifling offences and errors. As a matter of fact, He is very kind and sympathetic to all His creatures and rules over them with great compassion. That is why He forgives and forbears your shortcomings over and over again and shows compassion and leniency to you even though you become guilty of disobedience, sins and crimes. You impudently discard His Commandments, knowing well that He is your Providence; yet He forgives and forbears and gives you respite after respite, so that you may understand the Reality and mend your ways. Had He been ruthless He could have destroyed you instantly and raised up another people to replace you, or destroyed the whole human race and created another species."

102. That is, "Resurrection," when all human beings, from the first to the last, shall be brought back to life and presented before their Lord for final judgement.

103. That is, "If you do not take the warning from Me and do not give up your wrong ways, then you may go on following the ways of your choice, and let me follow my way. Ultimately, both you and I will see the consequences."

104. The preceding discourse (v. 135) ended with these words: "If these people are not willing to accept your Admonition and insist on their ignorance, tell them to act in their own way and that you will act according to your own way. The Day of Judgement will surely come one day when they will know the consequences of their conduct. Anyhow, this is certain that the workers of iniquity will not be successful there." Now from here (vv. 136-146), instances of their ignorance are being cited to tell them what their "iniquity" was in which they persisted and from which they could not expect any success.

105. They assigned a portion of the agricultural produce to Allah as a mark of their gratitude because they believed that all land belonged to Allah Who caused the crops to grow; likewise they set apart for Allah a portion of the animals which were of great use to them because He was their Creator as well. But at the same time, they also assigned a portion as offerings to the patron gods of their family or clan, for they believed that Allah showed His kindness to them, because their gods, goddesses, angels, jinn, stars and the souls of their dead ancestors interceded with Him in their behalf. They also expected that in this way they would continue their kindness to them. That is why Allah is first of all taking them to task for the iniquity they were committing, so as to say, "It is sheer ingratitude that you are making offerings to others of the things that I have created and given you with My own mercy and grace. How is it, then, that you are making others partners in the offerings of your gratitude to Me? Do you think that I give these things to you because of the intercession of others?" Then, by implication, Allah has rebuked them for dividing the shares between Him and the partners set up by

them with Him in accordance with their own presumptions. This is because they have become their own law-makers and assign to Allah and to others whatever share they deem proper, when, in fact, Allah is the real giver of everything. Therefore, the portion to be assigned to Him in gratitude should be determined by His Law, which should also decide the shares of the other rightful claimants to it. It is thus clear that even that share, which they arbitrarily set apart for Allah and distribute in the poor and indigent, does not merit any worth and there is no reason why it should be accepted by Allah.

106. This implies a fine sarcasm. They have been rebuked for the evil practices to which they resorted in order to reduce even that portion which they themselves ear-marked for Allah, so as to increase the portion set apart for their gods. This showed that they were far more interested in their self-made gods than God. For instance, they would not mind if any fruit or grain out of the share assigned to Allah happened to go to the other side, but would return it, if anything happened to go to the share of Allah from the share of their gods. In case of drought, if they were forced to make use of the consecrated grain, they would use the share ear-marked for Allah but would not touch the share of their gods for fear lest any misfortune should befall them on account of its desecration. If there happened to be a deficiency in the share of their gods, they would make it up from that of Allah's share, but in the reverse case, they would not take even the smallest thing from the share of their gods to make up for the deficiency in Allah's share. Obviously they would invent very plausible excuses for this. For instance, they would say, "God is rich and can afford to forgo any decrease in His share, but the case of gods is different because they are not rich like Allah: therefore they inflict punishment even at the slightest decrease in their share."

The root cause of these superstitious practices was the different uses to which the two consecrated shares were put. Allah's share was given to the beggars, the indigent, the way-farers, the orphans, etc., but the share consecrated to the gods went to the priests directly or indirectly when it was offered to the gods in their temples. That is why their selfish religious leaders had been, for centuries, impressing on their ignorant followers that there was no harm, if any decrease occurred in the share of Allah, but on no account should there be any decrease in the share of their gods, "the beloved of God." On the contrary, it was rather commendable that their share should continue to swell.

107. Here the word *shurakā* (associates) has been used in a different sense from the one employed in verse 136. There the "associates" meant the deities whose intercession they regarded as a means of attaining to the blessings and made them partners with Allah in offerings. But, on the contrary, in this verse "associates" implies the men and devils, who had made the killing of their own

children lawful and praiseworthy for them. In the preceding verse they were guilty of *shirk* because they associated others with Allah in His worship and devotion. Here they were guilty of *shirk* because they accepted others besides Allah as law-givers and made them judges for deciding the lawful and the unlawful. According to Islam, a person who accepts any law made by another than Allah as authoritative and follows it and considers himself subject to the limits prescribed by it, is guilty of making that being partner with Allah. Both these are acts of *shirk*: one is guilty of *shirk* whether or not one gives the title of lord or god to those to whom one consecrates offerings or accepts and obeys the laws made by them.

As regards the killing of their children, the Arabs committed this sin with three objects in view and the Qur'ān has condemned all the three:

(1) They killed their daughters in order to avoid the disgrace of having a son-in-law, or lest they should fall into the hands of the enemy during the clannish wars, or they should become a cause of disgrace for them in any other way.

(2) They killed their children for economic reasons. They feared lest the burden of their nourishment should become unbearable for them.

(3) They sacrificed their children at the altar of their gods to please them.

108. The word "ruin" here is very meaningful. On the one hand, it implies moral ruin, for the man who becomes so hard-hearted and cruel as starts killing his own children, loses not only the tender qualities of humanity but also those of animality; on the other, it also implies destruction of the human race and one's own nation, for the inevitable result of the killing of children is reduction of the population of one's own nation and consequently of the world as a whole. Obviously, the nation which prevents the birth of its future supporters and builders of its civilization and heirs of its heritage, or kills them as soon as they are born, most surely falls into the abyss of destruction. Above all, this inhuman cruelty to innocent children destroys all the chances of success in the life-after-death because such a one who kills his own humanity, nay, even his own animal instinct of love for offspring, and shows such enmity with the human race and with one's own nation, most surely incurs the most painful torture from Allah.

109. Their religious leaders, their chiefs and the elders of the clans and others who exercised any influence on them and who claimed to be the followers of the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael, had been adding different creeds, rites and practices to the pure religion taught by the Prophets and causing confusion in the minds of the people about it. Yet the common Arabs of the pre-Islamic period

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وَمَا كَانُوْا مُهْتَدِيْنَ ﴿١٤٠﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْشَاَ جَنّٰتٍ مَّعْرُوْشٰتٍ وَّغَيْرَ
مَعْرُوْشٰتٍ وَّالنَّخْلَ وَالزَّرْعَ مُخْتَلِفًا اُكُلُهٗ وَالزَّيْتُوْنَ وَالرُّمَّانَ
مُتَشَابِهًا وَّغَيْرَ مُتَشَابِهٍ ؕ كُلُوْا مِنْ ثَمَرِهٖٓ اِذَآ اَثْمَرَ وَاٰتُوْا حَقَّهٗ
يَوْمَ حَصَادِهٖ ۖ وَلَا تُسْرِفُوْا ؕ اِنَّهٗ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِيْنَ ﴿١٤١﴾ وَمِنَ الْاَنْعَامِ
حَمُوْلَةً وَّفَرْشًا ؕ كُلُوْا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوْا خُطُوٰتِ الشَّيْطٰنِ ؕ
اِنَّهٗ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿١٤٢﴾ ثَمٰنِيَةَ اَزْوَاجٍ ۚ مِنَ الضَّاْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَمِنَ
الْمَعْزِ اثْنَيْنِ ؕ قُلْ ءٰٓالذَّكَرَيْنِ حَرَّمَ اَمِ الْاُنْثَيَيْنِ اَمَّا اشْتَمَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ
اَرْحَامُ الْاُنْثَيَيْنِ ؕ نَبِّئُوْنِيْ بِعِلْمٍ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿١٤٣﴾ وَمِنَ الْاِبِلِ
اثْنَيْنِ وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ اثْنَيْنِ ؕ قُلْ ءٰٓالذَّكَرَيْنِ حَرَّمَ اَمِ الْاُنْثَيَيْنِ اَمَّا
اشْتَمَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ اَرْحَامُ الْاُنْثَيَيْنِ ؕ اَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَآءَ اِذْ وَصّٰىكُمُ اللّٰهُ
بِهٰذَا ۚ فَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا لِّيُضِلَّ النَّاسَ بِغَيْرِ
عِلْمٍ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿١٤٤﴾ قُلْ لَّآ اَجِدُ فِيْ مَآ اُوْحِيَ اِلَيَّ
مُحَرَّمًا عَلٰى طَاعِمٍ يَّطْعَمُهٗٓ اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّكُوْنَ مَيْتَةً اَوْ دَمًا مَّسْفُوْحًا
اَوْ لَحْمَ خِنْزِيْرٍ فَاِنَّهٗ رِجْسٌ اَوْ فِسْقًا اُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللّٰهِ بِهٖ ۚ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ
غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَّلَا عَادٍ فَاِنَّ رَبَّكَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿١٤٥﴾ وَعَلَى الَّذِيْنَ هَادُوْا
حَرَّمْنَا كُلَّ ذِيْ ظُفُرٍ ۚ وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ وَالْغَنَمِ حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ شُحُوْمَهُمَآ
اِلَّا مَا حَمَلَتْ ظُهُوْرُهُمَآ اَوِ الْحَوَايَآ اَوْ مَا اخْتَلَطَ بِعَظْمٍ ؕ ذٰلِكَ جَزَيْنٰهُمْ
بِبَغْيِهِمْ ۖ وَاِنَّا لَصٰدِقُوْنَ ﴿١٤٦﴾ فَاِنْ كَذَّبُوْكَ فَقُلْ رَّبُّكُمْ ذُوْ رَحْمَةٍ وَّاسِعَةٍ
وَلَا يُرَدُّ بَاْسُهٗ عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿١٤٧﴾ سَيَقُوْلُ الَّذِيْنَ اَشْرَكُوْا لَوْ

Most surely they became losers, who, in their folly and ignorance killed their own children, and made unlawful what Allah had provided them as sustenance falsely ascribing prohibitions to Allah. Surely they went astray and were not at all rightly guided.[115] 140

It is Allah, Who has produced gardens of upright trees and vineyards[116] and date-palm trees; Who has made the crops to grow, which yield different kinds of edibles; Who has produced olive and pomegranate trees, whose fruits are similar in shape yet differing in taste. Eat of their fruits, when they bear fruit, and give away Allah's due at the harvest time, but do not transgress the limits, for Allah does not like the transgressors. And it is He Who has created from among the cattle, beasts of burden and beasts for riding, and also those whose flesh you eat and whose skins you use for making beds;[117] therefore eat of those provisions that Allah has given you and do not follow in the footsteps of Satan for he is your open enemy.[118] Here are eight kinds of cattle — males and females. Take first a pair of the sheep family and a pair of the goat family, and O Muhammad, ask them, "Has He of these forbidden you (to partake of) the males or the females or the young ones that are in the wombs of the sheep and the goats? Tell me with knowledge, if you are men of truth."[119] Likewise, take a pair of the camel family and a pair of the cow family, and ask them, "Has He of these forbidden the males or the females or the young ones that are in the wombs of the she-camel and the cow?"[120] Were you present at the time when Allah prescribed these prohibitory laws? (If not), who can then be more wicked than the one, who invents a falsehood and ascribes it to Allah so that he should, without knowledge, mislead the people? Indeed, Allah does not show guidance to such transgresors. 141-144

O Muhammad, say to them, "I do not find in what has been revealed to me anything forbidden to an eater to eat except that it be carrion or the blood that has been shed or the flesh of swine, for it is unclean, or flesh of an animal that has become profane because of having been slaughtered in any other name than that of Allah.[121] But if one is forced in a case of certain helplessness (to eat any of these) without any intention of disobedience, and without transgressing the limit of absolute necessity, (he will find that) your Lord is Forgiving and Merciful." And We prohibited to those people, who had adopted 145-147

Judaism, all animals with claws and the fat of oxen and goats except what is on their backs or their entrails or what sticks to their bones; this was the punishment We had inflicted on them for their rebellion.[122] And We are telling the truth. Now if they belie you, say to them, "Your Lord has limitless mercy: but His punishment cannot be warded off from the criminals."[123]

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believed that they were following the religion of their Prophets, which was the chosen religion of Allah, though it had been utterly polluted. This was because no record of the real religion of the Prophets had been preserved in their traditions or history or in any other book and none could sift it from the additions and changes that had been made in it afterwards.

110. That is, "O Messenger, you need not worry about them, if, in spite of your admonitions, they insist on following the false ways they have invented. All this has come to pass because it is the will of God that they should be allowed to follow the way of their choice; otherwise they would not have been able to do what they are doing."

111. Here another self-made religious regulation of the *mushrik* Arabs has been refuted. They used to make vows to reserve certain cattle or the products of certain fields for some particular temple or saint or deity and had made set rules for their use. Accordingly, the right of the use of different kinds of offerings was reserved for a particular kind of people. Allah has declared these to be acts of *shirk* and warned them against these self-made laws, as if to say, "We will punish you for making vows concerning offerings to others from provisions provided by Us, because We have neither commanded you to make such vows nor prescribed restrictions for their use. All these things have been invented by the rebellious and arrogant people who shall be dealt with severely."

112. We learn from traditions that in certain forms of vows and offerings, it was not considered right to pronounce the name of Allah over cattle. It was also forbidden to ride on them during the Hajj journey, because one has to pronounce: *Labbaik, Allahumma labbaik:* "I am present, O my Allah, I am present," during it. Likewise, they insisted that Allah's name should not be mentioned while milching them or riding them or slaughtering them or eating them.

113. That is, "These regulations were not prescribed by Allah, but they were following these with the conviction that they had been prescribed by Allah, though they had no authority from Allah for this thing. The only authority, they had, was that it had been the practice of their forefathers."

114. According to another article of the self-made law of the Arabs about the cattle, consecrated by vows and offerings, the males alone were allowed to eat of the flesh of the young ones born from their wombs and the females were forbidden to eat of it. However, if the young one was born dead or it died immediately after its birth, both the males and the females could partake of it.

115. That is, "Although those people, who invented these rituals and customs, were your forefathers, your religious leaders and your chiefs, yet the fact is that they were wrong and had gone astray. Also it is a fact that those ways were wrong and they cannot become right and sacred simply because these were invented by your forefathers and your religious leaders, who permitted the inhuman slaughter of one's own children, who made unlawful, without rhyme or reason, the pure provisions given by Allah and who introduced innovations in religion and ascribed them to Allah. They cannot be regarded as rightly guided by any stretch of imagination even though they be your forefathers and leaders; they were certainly misguided and shall bear the consequences of their evil ways."

116. The original Arabic words *Jannat-im-ma'rushat-in* literally mean gardens of creepers, trellised, and has been translated into vineyards; *wa ghaira ma'rishat-in* literally mean gardens of plants that are un-trellised and has been translated into gardens of up-right trees.

117. The original Arabic word *farsh* refers to animals (like sheep etc.,) in the sense that they are of small size and almost touch the ground while they are moving about, or in the sense that they are laid on the ground at the time of slaughter, or in the sense that beds are made of their skins and hair.

118. From the context in which this verse (142) occurs, it is obvious that Allah wills to impress three things: (1) "The gardens, the fields and the animals you possess, have all been bestowed by Allah, and none else has any share in this favour and, therefore, none else is entitled to any gratitude for this." (2) "As none else has any share in this favour, these should be used in accordance with the Law of Allah, and none else has any right to prescribe limits for their use; therefore the one who observes the rituals prescribed by any one other than Allah, transgresses the limits prescribed by Allah and follows the ways of Satan." (3) "All these things have been created by Allah for food and other uses for mankind and none has any right to make these unlawful without "knowledge." Therefore Allah does not approve of the restrictions that have been imposed on these things, as a result of superstitions and presumptions."

119. That is, "Your answer should be based on knowledge and not on mere presumptions, superstitions or the traditions of your forefathers."

120. The question whether some animals of the same family are lawful and others unlawful, has been posed with such a detail so that the absurdity of their superstitions may become obvious even to them. It is absurd on the face of it that the male of the same family should be lawful and the female unlawful, or conversely, the female should be lawful and the male unlawful, or the animal should be lawful, but the young one of the same be unlawful. This is such a nonsensical thing that no right thinking person, nay, no man in his senses, can imagine that Allah could ever impose such unreasonable restrictions. It should be noted that the method applied by the Qur'ān to show the absurdity of the superstitious practices of the Arabs can also be applied with equal force to expose the folly of the superstitious practices of the other nations of the world, which have imposed unreasnable restrictions on food and adopted inhuman indiscriminations against other human beings.

121. This subject has already been dealt with in v. 173, Al-Baqarah, and in v. 3, Al-Ma'idah, and will be further discussed in v. 115, An-Nahl below.

There appears to be a little difference in the wording of this verse and that of v. 173, Al-Baqarah. In the latter verse it is simply 'blood' that is forbidden, but in this verse it is the 'blood' that has been shed, when an animal is wounded or slaughtered. The addition of the word *masfūh* (that has been shed) merely explains the nature of the 'blood' and does not make any difference in the "Commandment" itself. Likewise in v. 3 of Al-Mā'idah, some other things besides these four have also been mentioned—the animals that have been strangled or beaten to death, or killed by a fall, or mangled by a beast of prey. This, too, does not make any difference in the "Commandment" in the two verses, because this is an explanation which shows that the animals which are killed in that way should also be considered as "carrion."

Now let us consider the various opinions of the Jurists. Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās and Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah were of the opinion that, out of the animal food, only these four were unlawful and all others were lawful. But there are several Traditions to the effect that the Holy Prophet prohibited other animals besides these four or held them in detestation, e.g., domestic donkeys and fanged beasts of prey and birds with claws. Therefore most jurists do not consider the prohibition to be confined to these four things only, but extend it to others; then there is also a difference of opinion among the jurists about the prohibition or otherwise of certain animals. For instance, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, Imām Mālik and Imām Shāfi'ī declare the domestic donkey to be unlawful, but there are others who assert that the domestic donkey, is not unlawful and say that it was prohibited by the Holy Prophet on one occasion only for some special reason. The Ḥanafis consider the carnivorous beasts and birds of prey and the animals that live on dead flesh to be

absolutely unlawful, but according to Imām Mālik and Auzā'ī, the birds of prey are lawful and Laith considers the cat to be lawful. According to Imām Shafi`i, only those carnivorous beasts are unlawful that (like the lion, wolf, tiger) attack man. According to `Ikrimah, the crow and the badger are both lawful. Then according to the Hanafīs, all crawling creatures are unlawful, whereas Ibn Abi-Laila, Imām Mālik and Auzā`i consider the snake to be lawful.

A careful and critical study of the above makes it quite clear that, in reality, only these four things mentioned in the Qur'ān are unlawful and that there are certain other animal foods that are detestable in various degrees. Therefore those things, which according to authentic Traditions were held in detestation by the Holy Prophet, are almost unlawful, but those things about which there is a difference of opinion among the jurists, their detestation is doubtful. As far as personal detestation of certain things by some people is concerned, the Islamic Law does not compel anyone to eat what one dislikes. The same applies to the detestation of certain things by some groups or nations. Conversely, the Law does not allow any person or community or nation to force others to consider as unlawful anything that they detest, or to prohibit its use to those who consider them unlawful.

122. That certain things were made unlawful for them as punishment for their rebellion has been mentioned in the Qur'ān at three places:

(1) "All the articles of food, which are lawful in the Muhammadan Law, were also lawful for the children of Israel, except those which Israel had forbidden for himself before the Torah was sent down. Say to them, `Bring the Torah and read out any passage from it (in support of your objection), if you are in the right." (*Al-'Imrān*. 111):

(2) "It is because of the criminal attitude of those who became Jews..... that We had made unlawful many pure things which were formerly lawful for them". (An-Nisā' IV:160)

(3) Here in this Sūrah, in verse 146.

From the above three verses, we conclude that the difference between the Muhammadan and the Jewish Laws in regard to the legality or otherwise of animal food is based on two things. First, centuries before the revelation of the Torah, the Prophet Jacob (Israil) had given up the use of several things, and after him, his offspring also did the same. This went on for such a long time that the jurists of the Jewish Law began to believe that those things were unlawful in their religion. Accordingly, they inserted in the Torah the prohibition of those things, the three of which were the camel, the hare and the coney. That is why the Torah, as contained

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شَآءَ اللّٰهُ مَآ اَشْرَكْنَا وَلَآ اٰبَآؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَّمْنَا مِنْ شَیْءٍ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ كَذَّبَ
الَّذِیْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ حَتّٰى ذَاقُوْا بَاْسَنَا ؕ قُلْ هَلْ عِنْدَكُمْ مِّنْ عِلْمٍ
فَتُخْرِجُوْهُ لَنَا ؕ اِنْ تَتَّبِعُوْنَ اِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَاِنْ اَنْتُمْ اِلَّا تَخْرُصُوْنَ ﴿148﴾ قُلْ
فَلِلّٰهِ الْحُجَّةُ الْبَالِغَةُ ۚ فَلَوْ شَآءَ لَهَدٰىكُمْ اَجْمَعِیْنَ ﴿149﴾ قُلْ هَلُمَّ
شُهَدَآءَكُمُ الَّذِیْنَ یَشْهَدُوْنَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ حَرَّمَ هٰذَا ۚ فَاِنْ شَهِدُوْا فَلَا
تَشْهَدْ مَعَهُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ اَهْوَآءَ الَّذِیْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰیٰتِنَا وَالَّذِیْنَ لَا
یُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ وَهُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ یَعْدِلُوْنَ ﴿150﴾ قُلْ تَعَالَوْا اَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ
رَبُّكُمْ عَلَیْكُمْ اَلَّا تُشْرِكُوْا بِهٖ شَیْـًٔا وَّبِالْوَالِدَیْنِ اِحْسَانًا ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوْٓا
اَوْلَادَكُمْ مِّنْ اِمْلَاقٍ ؕ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ وَاِیَّاهُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ
مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِیْ حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ اِلَّا
بِالْحَقِّ ؕ ذٰلِكُمْ وَصّٰىكُمْ بِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿151﴾ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوْا مَالَ الْیَتِیْمِ
اِلَّا بِالَّتِیْ هِیَ اَحْسَنُ حَتّٰى یَبْلُغَ اَشُدَّهٗ ۚ وَاَوْفُوا الْكَیْلَ وَالْمِیْزَانَ
بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ لَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا اِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ وَاِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَاعْدِلُوْا وَلَوْ كَانَ
ذَا قُرْبٰى ۚ وَبِعَهْدِ اللّٰهِ اَوْفُوْا ؕ ذٰلِكُمْ وَصّٰىكُمْ بِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿152﴾
وَاَنَّ هٰذَا صِرَاطِیْ مُسْتَقِیْمًا فَاتَّبِعُوْهُ ۚ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ
عَنْ سَبِیْلِهٖ ؕ ذٰلِكُمْ وَصّٰىكُمْ بِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿153﴾ ثُمَّ اٰتَیْنَا مُوْسَى الْكِتٰبَ
تَمَامًا عَلَى الَّذِیْٓ اَحْسَنَ وَتَفْصِیْلًا لِّكُلِّ شَیْءٍ وَّهُدًى وَّرَحْمَةً
لَّعَلَّهُمْ بِلِقَآءِ رَبِّهِمْ یُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿154﴾ وَهٰذَا كِتٰبٌ اَنْزَلْنٰهُ مُبٰرَكٌ فَاتَّبِعُوْهُ
وَاتَّقُوْا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُوْنَ ﴿155﴾ اَنْ تَقُوْلُوْٓا اِنَّمَآ اُنْزِلَ الْكِتٰبُ عَلٰى طَآئِفَتَیْنِ

(In reply to these things of yours) the *mushrikīn* will surely say. 148-149
"Had Allah willed, neither we nor our forefathers would have committed *shirk*, nor would have we made anything unlawful."[124] Likewise the people before them had treated the truth as falsehood by such (absurd) excuses until they tasted Our scourge. Say to them, "Have you any knowledge that you can produce before Us in support thereof? You are following nothing but conjecture and making false presumptions." Then say, ("In contrast to your lame excuse,) Allah's argument is conclusive; had Allah so willed, He would surely have shown guidance to all of you."[125]

Say to them, "Produce your witness who can testify that Allah 150
has forbidden all this." But, even if they testify, you should not bear witness with them.[126] And you should never follow the desires of those, who have treated Our Revelations as false and who do not believe in the Hereafter and who set up others as equals with their Lord.

O Muhammad, say to them, "Come, I will recite what limits 151-153
your Lord has set for you."[127] (He has enjoined:) (1) That you should not set up anything as a partner with Him,[128] (2) and you should treat your parents kindly,[129] (3) and you should not kill your children for fear of poverty, for We provide sustenance for you and will provide sustenance for them also, (4) and you should not go near indecent things[130] whether they be open or hidden, (5) and you should not kill any living being whom Allah has forbidden to kill except by right.[131] These are the things which He has enjoined on you: it may be that you use your common sense. And He has enjoined:(6) that you should not go near the property of an orphan except in the best way,[132] until he reaches his maturity.(7) and you should use a full measure and a just balance. We charge one only with that much responsibility that one can bear,[133] (8) and whatever you say should be just, even if it is concerning your own relatives,(9) and you should fulfil your covenant with Allah.[134] Allah has enjoined these things on you so that you may follow the admonition.(10) And Allah also enjoins: "This way alone is My Right Way; therefore you should follow this Way and should not follow other ways lest they should lead you astray from His Way.[135] This is what Allah has enjoined on you so that you may avoid crooked ways."

154-155 Then,[135a] We had given to Moses the Book to complete the blessing for those who adopted the righteous attitude; it contained details about all important things, and was a perfect guidance and mercy. (And it had been given to the children of Israel so that) the people might believe in the (ultimate) meeting with their Lord.[136] And likewise have We sent down this Book, which is a perfect blessing; so follow this and adopt the God fearing attitude so that mercy may be shown to you.

Contd. from p. 571]

in the existing Bible prohibits their eating. (Levit. 11: 4-6 and Deut. 14:7). But, the open challenge of the Qur'ān to them to bring the Torah in proof thereof shows that the commandments referred to above did not exist in the Torah at that time and were inserted afterwards; otherwise the Jews would have at once accepted the challenge of the Qur'ān and presented the commandments thereof.

The second difference between the two laws was caused by the rebellious attitude of the Jews against the Divine Law. They became their own law-makers and made many things unlawful by their hair-splitting and Allah let them remain involved in that misunderstanding as a punishment. These things comprise two categories : (1) Animals with claws such as the ostrich, the cuckoo, the swan, etc., and (2) the fat of the cow and the goat, etc. Afterwards both kinds of "prohibitions" were incorporated in the existing Torah. (Levit. 11 : 16-18, Deut. 14 : 14-17, Levit. 3 : 17, 7 : 22-23). But it is obvious from An - Nisā, IV : 160 that at first these things were not unlawful in the Torah, but were made so after the Prophet Jesus Christ. History also bears evidence that the existing Jewish Law was formulated by Rabbi Judas at the end of the second century of the Christian Era.

Now let us consider the objection that might arise regarding the above explanation. If these things were made unlawful in the manner explained above, why has, then, Allah used the word *harramna* ("We prohibited") here in verse 130 and in verse 160 of An-Nisā? In considering the objection, we should keep in mind the two ways in which things are made unlawful by Allah. (1) He prohibits a thing through a Messenger and a Book, and this is the blessing from Him. (2) He sets false religious law-givers and counterfeit law-makers over His rebellious servants and they declare pure things as unlawful. As such a 'prohibition' is the curse of God and a punishment from Him, it has been attributed to Him.

123. That is, "Your Lord has limitless Mercy and if even now you repent of your disobedience and adopt the right way of obedience, He will forgive you. But if you persist in your criminal and rebellious attitude, you should note it well that none will be able to ward off His wrath and punishment from you."

124. That is "The *mushrikīn* will put forward the same old excuses to justify their crime and wrong conduct which have always been put forward by the criminals and wrong-doers of every age: they will say, 'It is the will of Allah that we should commit *shirk* and make some lawful things unlawful; for, if Allah had not so willed, it would not have been possible for us to commit such acts. As we are doing these things in accordance with the will of Allah, we are doing the right thing. And if what we are doing is not right, Allah is to blame for it and not we. We are bound by the will of Allah to do what we are doing because anything other than this is beyond our power."

125. In order to understand the significance of this decisive answer to their lame excuse, let us analyse it: (1) It warns: "The 'will of God' has always been made an excuse by the criminals of all ages to justify their wicked acts and erroneous conduct. This misled them so much that they rejected the Truth and consequently met with ruin that overtakes those who fight against the Truth." (2) "The excuse which you are putting forward is not based on knowledge but on conjecture and guess-work. The whole of your argument is based on hearsay about the will of Allah. You do not understand the meaning of 'the will of Allah' in regard to man. Therefore you wrongly believe that if a thief commits theft he is not to be regarded as a thief, because he had done this under 'the will of Allah.' — Its real meaning is that Allah will open for a man whatever way he would choose for himself — the way of gratitude or ingratitude, guidance or deviation, obedience or disobedience. Then Allah will let the man do anything, good or bad, he chooses, and will provide for its fulfilment the means that fit in His vast universal designs. Therefore if you and your forefathers were allowed to commit *shirk* and declare lawful things unlawful under the will of Allah, they had to bear its consequences, for it does not mean that Allah approved of these things. Likewise you shall be responsible and accountable for your wrong choice and for your evil intentions and wicked deeds."

The last sentence, "..... had Allah so willed, He would have shown guidance to all of you," settles the issue decisively. It implies: "Your argument, 'had Allah willed, we would not have committed *shirk*,' is incomplete. The complete thing will be this: 'Had Allah willed, He would have shown guidance to all of us." In other words, "You yourselves do not intend to choose the right way, but you desire that Allah should make you inherently righteous like angels. You should, however, note it well, that Allah could have done so if He had so willed. But this is not His will. Therefore He will let you go astray on the wrong way that you yourselves have chosen to follow."

126. That is, "If they understand the grave responsibility of bearing witness and realize that one should bear witness only to that thing of which one has

knowledge, they will never testify that all their self-imposed restrictions on food, that are current among them and according to which such and such a one should not eat such and such a thing, have been prescribed by Allah. But if these people do not realize the responsibility of bearing witness and impudently give false evidence in the name of Allah, you should not associate yourself with their falsehood. As a matter of fact, the real object of challenging them to bear witness is to sort out the righteous people, if any, from among them, and not that you should accept their false testimony. It is expected that in response to the challenge to bear witness, those, who have any righteousness left in them, will consider very seriously whether the rituals they were following were really prescribed by Allah and if they find no proof that these were sent down by Allah, they will give them up."

127. That is, "The limits set by your Lord are not those which you have imposed on yourselves, but they are the following which Allah has set for the regulation of human life and which have always been the fundamental basis of all Divine Laws." (Please compare these precepts with those contained in Exodus chapter 20).

128. One is guilty of *shirk* if: (*a*) one sets up another besides Allah as god, or (*b*) one attributes to another any of those attributes that naturally and exclusively belong to Allah, or (*c*) one sets up a partner with Allah in His powers, or (*d*) in His rights.

According to (*a*), all those creeds which set up partners with Allah in the essence of His Godhead shall be *shirk*, e.g., the creed of Trinity of the Christians, the creed of *mushrik* Arabs to believe in the angels to be daughters of God and to attribute "Godhead" to their gods and goddesses and the members of the royal families.

According to (*b*), all those, who believe that someone other than Allah also possesses one or some or all of the attributes which exclusively belong to Allah, shall be guilty of *shirk*. For instance, it will be *shirk* if one believes that someone knows all about everything including the "unseen" or hears everything or is completely free from each and every defect and weakness, and is infallible like Allah.

According to (*c*), one shall be guilty of *shirk*, if one believes that someone else besides Allah is able to wield any one or all of those powers that exclusively belong to Him. For instance, one shall be committing *shirk*, if one believes that someone else besides Allah can, in a supernatural way, benefit or harm or fulfil needs or help or protect or defend, or hear prayers, or make or mar destinies, or set the limits of lawful or unlawful, proper or improper, or prescribe laws (*shar'a*)

for human life. These shall be *shirk*, for all these things are the exclusive characteristics of Godhead.

It shall be *shirk* under (*d*) if one surrenders to another any or all of those rights to which Allah alone is entitled. For instance, Allah alone has the right that man should stand with bound hands, bow and prostrate before Him, or he should make vows and give offerings in His name alone or make sacrifices as a mark of gratitude in acknowledgement of His greatness; He alone has the right that He should be invoked to ward off troubles etc. Likewise, Allah alone is entitled to all forms of worship, devotion and glory and He alone has the right to be loved more than anyone or anything else and all other affections should be sacrificed for His love. He alone should be feared so that one would not dare displease or disobey Him openly and secretly. He alone has the right to be obeyed unconditionally and unreservedly; and His Guidance alone should be made the sole standard of judging right from wrong and none else should be obeyed except in accordance with the obedience to Allah. If ever one of these rights is surrendered to someone other than Allah, it will be setting that one as a partner with Him, whether that one is given the title of god or not.

129. "Kind treatment" includes respect and honour, obedience and desire to please and serve parents etc., This right of the parents has been stated in the Qur'ān at several places immediately after the rights of Allah. This is a clear proof that this right of the parents is only next to the right of Allah and has priority over all human rights.

130. The Arabic word *fawāhish* applies to all kinds of impure acts, whose obscenity is absolutely obvious. The Qur'ān declares adultery, sodomy, nudism, calumny, marriage with father's wife as "indecencies." Besides these, theft, drinking and beggary have also been included in the list of indecencies in the Traditions. Likewise, all other obscene acts are also indecencies and the Divine Commandment demands that such acts should neither be committed openly nor secretly.

131. This is the declaration of the sanctity of human life by Allah Who has made it inviolable as a basic principle. As regards its destruction "by right", the Qur'ān allows this in three cases and the Holy Prophet added two more to these. The Qur'ān makes it lawful to take the life of the one:

(1) who is proved guilty of the intentional murder of another person.

(2) who opposes Islam and obstructs its establishment so as to leave no other alternative than to fight with him,

[Contd. on p. 580

مِنْ قَبْلِنَا ۪ وَ اِنْ كُنَّا عَنْ دِرَاسَتِهِمْ لَغٰفِلِيْنَ ﴿۱۵۶﴾ اَوْ تَقُوْلُوْا لَوْ اَنَّاۤ اُنْزِلَ
عَلَيْنَا الْكِتٰبُ لَكُنَّاۤ اَهْدٰى مِنْهُمْ ۚ فَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ بَيِّنَةٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَ
هُدًى وَّ رَحْمَةٌ ۚ فَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَذَّبَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَ صَدَفَ عَنْهَا ؕ
سَنَجْزِي الَّذِيْنَ يَصْدِفُوْنَ عَنْ اٰيٰتِنَا سُوْٓءَ الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوْا
يَصْدِفُوْنَ ﴿۱۵۷﴾ هَلْ يَنْظُرُوْنَ اِلَّاۤ اَنْ تَاْتِيَهُمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ اَوْ يَاْتِيَ رَبُّكَ اَوْ
يَاْتِيَ بَعْضُ اٰيٰتِ رَبِّكَ ؕ يَوْمَ يَاْتِيْ بَعْضُ اٰيٰتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنْفَعُ نَفْسًا
اِيْمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ اٰمَنَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ اَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِيْۤ اِيْمَانِهَا خَيْرًا ؕ قُلِ
انْتَظِرُوْۤا اِنَّا مُنْتَظِرُوْنَ ﴿۱۵۸﴾ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ فَرَّقُوْا دِيْنَهُمْ وَ كَانُوْا شِيَعًا
لَّسْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِيْ شَيْءٍ ؕ اِنَّمَاۤ اَمْرُهُمْ اِلَى اللّٰهِ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوْا
يَفْعَلُوْنَ ﴿۱۵۹﴾ مَنْ جَآءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهٗ عَشْرُ اَمْثَالِهَا ۚ وَ مَنْ جَآءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ
فَلَا يُجْزٰۤى اِلَّا مِثْلَهَا وَ هُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۱۶۰﴾ قُلْ اِنَّنِيْ هَدٰىنِيْ رَبِّيْۤ اِلٰى
صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ۚ دِيْنًا قِيَمًا مِّلَّةَ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ حَنِيْفًا ۚ وَ مَا كَانَ مِنَ
الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ﴿۱۶۱﴾ قُلْ اِنَّ صَلَاتِيْ وَ نُسُكِيْ وَ مَحْيَايَ وَ مَمَاتِيْ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ
الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿۱۶۲﴾ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ ۚ وَ بِذٰلِكَ اُمِرْتُ وَ اَنَا اَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ ﴿۱۶۳﴾
قُلْ اَغَيْرَ اللّٰهِ اَبْغِيْ رَبًّا وَّ هُوَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ؕ وَ لَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ
نَفْسٍ اِلَّا عَلَيْهَا ۚ وَ لَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِّزْرَ اُخْرٰى ۚ ثُمَّ اِلٰى رَبِّكُمْ مَّرْجِعُكُمْ
فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيْهِ تَخْتَلِفُوْنَ ﴿۱۶۴﴾ وَ هُوَ الَّذِيْ جَعَلَكُمْ خَلٰٓئِفَ
الْاَرْضِ وَ رَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجٰتٍ لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِيْ مَاۤ اٰتٰىكُمْ ؕ
اِنَّ رَبَّكَ سَرِيْعُ الْعِقَابِ ۖۚ وَ اِنَّهٗ لَغَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۱۶۵﴾

Now you cannot say, "The Book was sent down to the two communities before us,[137] and we were unaware of what they studied and taught." And now you cannot put forward even this excuse: "If the Book had been sent down to us, we would have proved ourselves more righteous than they." Now that a clear proof and Guidance and Blessing, has come to you from your Lord, who can be more unjust than the one who treats Our Revelations as false and turns away from them?[138] We will inflict the severest torment on those who turn away from Our Signs because of their aversion. Do the people now wait that the angels should come down before them, or that your Lord may Himself come down, or that manifest Signs[139] of your Lord should appear? On the Day when some clear Signs of your Lord will appear, his faith shall not profit the man who did not believe before or who, while professing to believe, did not do good deeds.[140] O Muhammad, say to them, "Well, you may wait if you will: We, too, will wait." 156-158

You have nothing to do with those who have split up their religion and become sects.[141] Their case rests with Allah, and He Himself will let them know what they have done. He, who will bring a good deed before Allah, will receive a tenfold reward for it, and he, who will bring an evil deed, shall receive only that much punishment which he deserves, and no one will be treated unjustly. 159-160

O Muhammad, say, "As for me, my Lord has most certainly guided me on the Straight Way, the ever True Faith, Abraham's Way,[142] which he had adopted exclusively and whole-heartedly and he was not of *mushrikīn*." And declare, "My *Salāt* and my rites of worship[143] and my life and my death, all are for Allah, the Lord of the universe, Who has no partner with Him. This is what I have been enjoined, and I am the first to surrender to Him." Say, "Should I seek another Lord beside Allah when He is the Lord of everything?[144] Every person is himself accountable for what he earns, for no bearer of burden bears the burden of another.[145] Ultimately, you shall all have to return to your Lord: then He will tell you the reality of that about which you differ. It is He, Who has made you the vicegerents on the earth, and raised some of you above others in ranks so that He may test you in what He has given you.[146] Indeed your Lord is swift in inflicting punishment: yet He is also very Forgiving and Merciful." 161-165

Contd. from p. 577]

(3) who spreads disorder within the Islamic territory or exerts to overthrow the established Islamic government.

Besides these, the Holy Prophet has made it lawful to take the life of the one:

(4) who, in spite of being married, is proved guilty of adultery,

(5) who becomes an apostate and deserts the Islamic Community.

These five are the only cases in which it becomes lawful to take human life and there is no other case in which it becomes lawful to take human life and there is no other case besides these in which human life may be taken, be it that of a Muslim, or of a *dhimmi*, or of an unbeliever.

132. "The best way" will be the one which is based on selflessness, good intentions and the welfare of the concerned orphan, and which is not objectionable in the sight of God or man.

133. "You shall use full measure and a just balance," is a fundamental principle of the Divine Law: Allah has added, "We charge one.....one can bear," to assure people that whoever tries his very best to be just and right in measuring, weighing and carrying out other trade transactions, will be absolved from his responsibility and will not be taken to account, if in spite of his best efforts, there happens to be an unintentional error.

134. "Covenant with Allah" is: (i) The solemn agreement which man makes with Allah, (*ii*) the solemn pledge which he makes with another man in the name of Allah, and (*iii*) the natural compact that comes into force as soon as one is born in the human society on Allah's earth.

The first two kinds of covenants are intentional and optional, but the third one is a moral and natural obligation. Though man has no option in the choice of the third compact, yet it is as binding as the first two and should be honoured as much. This is because Allah has given him life with extraordinary physical and mental faculties and furnished the earth for his habitation and provided nourishment, and limitless resources etc., for him. Naturally all this entails some rights of Allah on him. Likewise it entails some rights of the mother who gives birth to and nourishes him and of the father who brings him up and of the society that affords him many kinds of facilities and opportunities. All these rights become, by their very nature, obligatory on him in varying degrees. It is true that this "Covenant" of man with God and society has not been written in any statute book, nevertheless it has been ingrained by Nature in each and every particle of his body, which itself owes its very existence to this Covenant. A reference to this has

been made in Al-Baqarah, II: 27: "....who break Allah's Covenant after ratifying it: who cut asunder what Allah has ordered to be joined and who produce chaos on the earth." It has again been mentioned in Al-A'raf, VII: 172 to this effect: At the time of the creation of Adam, Allah brought forth all his would-be descendants up to the Last Day, from the loins of mankind, and made them stand witnesses to the Covenant that He is their Lord.

135. "..... you should follow this way because this is the Right Way." This "Natural Covenant" demands that man should follow the Way shown by Allah, because any deviation from it into the paths of rebellion or independence or in the worship of another than Allah will be the first violation against that Covenant, and will mislead one into other violations one after the other. Besides, no man can fulfil the obligations of this most delicate, vast and intricate Covenant unless one accepts Divine Guidance and follows it in every aspect of life. "..... you should not follow other ways" because they will turn you away from His Right Way which is the only Way which leads to His nearness, pleasure and approval. Moreover, when the people deviate from His High Way, each man has to make his own choice out of the hundreds of other ways. Thus the people are scattered in all directions and there is bewilderment, confusion and disorder among all mankind and this becomes a hindrance in the way of its real progress and development (Please see also E.N. 35, Al-Mā'idah).

136. "..... to believe in meeting with one's Lord" means that one should believe that one shall have to render an account of one's deeds to one's Lord; therefore one should live a life of responsibility. Here it may imply that the Torah was sent (1) to produce a sense of responsibility among the Israelites themselves and (2) to induce the other people to make a study of its high moral system of life, and to observe the noble effects of its guidance and blessing on those who adopted its teachings so that they may be convinced that a life of responsibility based on the belief in the life of the Hereafter is far better than an irresponsible life based on its rejection and this observation may convince them to believe in the Hereafter.

137. That is, to the Jews and the Christians.

138. Here "*Ayat*" are Allah's Revelations presented in the Holy Qur'ān as well as His Messenger's noble character and the pure lives of the Believers which clearly distinguished them from the unbelievers, and also those wonderful phenomena of Nature which the Qur'ān was putting forward as proofs of the truth of its Message.

139. "Manifest Signs" are the signs of the Day of Resurrection or some imminent scourge or some other Sign that may unveil the Reality in such a way as

to leave no doubt about it and after which no more chance for test and trial might be left.

140. That is, if after seeing these "Manifest Signs" a disbeliever repents of his disbelief and professes faith, such a conversion shall be meaningless; likewise the one who professes to believe but adopts the way of disobedience, shall be deemed to have no faith at all, because Faith and Obedience can have any value only up to the time that the reality remains hidden behind the curtain, and the prospect of a long life is ahead and the world with all its allurements is deluding one into believing that there is no Allah and no Hereafter; therefore, one should "Eat, drink and be merry."

141. Though the address is directed to the Holy Prophet, yet all the followers of the True Religion are, through him, included in it. It means that the righteous people should not follow the ways of those who became sects by causing divisions in the True Religion, which has always been the same and is the same today. Its basic principles are that Allah alone is the Deity and Lord of the whole Universe, that none should be set up as His equal or partner in His attributes, powers or rights, that there shall be the next world, in which all human beings shall have to render the account of what they do in this world, and that they should mould their lives in accordance with those broad fundamental principles that have been taught by Allah through His Messengers and Books. This is the True Religion that had been given to mankind from the very first day of its creation. As regards the different religions and sects that came into existence afterwards, they were the result of the changes that were made in the True Religion by different people at different times. Some of them introduced new things into it, others made changes in it to suit their lusts; still others mixed things in it because of their exaggerated reverence. Then they tampered with its creed by mixing with it their whims, their speculations and their philosophies. They changed it also by adding to its commandments their innovations and their self-made laws and by corrupting its regulations by hair-splitting and exaggerating the differences in its details and by rendering important things unimportant and *vice versa*. They went to two extremes: they adored some Prophets too much and opposed and rejected others. In this way numerous new religions and sects came into existence and divided humanity into fighting groups. Therefore it is essential for a follower of the True Religion to have nothing to do with any of these sects and to keep his own path clear of them.

142. "Abraham's Way": This is another distinctive characteristic of "the ever-True Faith." This has been given preference to "Moses' Way" or "Christ's Way" because the followers of Moses and Christ had applied the misnomers of "Judaism" and "Christianity" to that "Way." Moreover, the term "Abraham's

Way" has been used because both the Jews and the Christians acknowledged Abraham as a true Prophet. They also knew it well that he died long before the births of Judaism and Christianity. The Arab *mushrikīn* also could not deny that his "Way" was the Right Way, for they believed that he was a righteous man and in spite of their ignorance, they had to acknowledge that the founder of the Ka'bah was a pious worshipper of Allah and not an idolater.

143. The Arabic word *nusuk* ("rites of worship") may mean animal sacrifice as well as all other forms of prayer and worship.

144. That is, "When, in fact, Allah is the Lord of everything in the universe, how can any other be my Lord? When I see that the whole of the universe submits to His Law and I, too, being a part of the universe, have to submit to Him in my physical life, how can then it be rational that I should seek another Lord for the guidance of that part of my life for the conduct of which I have been given common sense and option?"

145. It means that everyone is responsible and accountable for his own deeds and this responsibility can, on no account, be shifted from one to the other.

146. In this verse three realities have been stated;

(1) That each and every thing in the universe belongs to Allah and all human beings are His vicegerents on the earth in the sense that He has entrusted many of His things to them and delegated powers to exploit them.

(2) That Allah has ascribed different ranks to His vicegerents in regard to the trusts. He has entrusted some with a large number of His things, while others with a small number and endowed some with a greater capacity for work than others. Likewise there is a difference in the powers He has delegated to them: nay, he has even given powers to some human beings over other human beings.

(3) That this worldly life is merely a test and all the things and powers that have been given as trusts are the means of the test. An accurate record is being kept of how each man is making use of his trust and how far he is exploiting these things in accordance with the terms of the trust and how he is using or abusing his abilities, capabilities, etc. in this regard. The result of his test will determine man's rank in the Next World.